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VESTIGES OF THE GAEL.

VESTIGES

OF THE

GAEL IN GWYNEDD.

BY THE

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Come quando la nebbia si dissipa,
Lo sguardo a poco a poco raffigura
Ciò che cela il vapor, che l'aere stipa.—DANTE.

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PREFACE.

The following Paper was commenced with a design of communicating it to the Cambrian Archæological Association, at their Meeting in August, 1850. It was thought that the subject might derive some degree of interest from the place of meeting, Dolgellau, being situated within the district treated of, and that some amount of confirmation, or the contrary, might be obtained from the local knowledge of Members present. It was found, however, that the proofs and arguments far exceeded the limits of recitation, and it became necessary to produce nothing at the Meeting beyond the general results. The details, being of a kind not altogether attractive to a public meeting, together with much which it was impossible to bring forward for want of time, were reserved to appear in the present form.

These facts will account for the shape into which a large part of the Paper has been thrown. It has not been thought requisite to distinguish the parts which were omitted in reading. They include, besides the quotations and details in the second, third, fourth and fifth sections,

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the theory developed in the seventh, and the whole of the last.

For the sake of those who are unacquainted with Welsh topography and history, it may be desirable to state, in explanation of the title, that Gwynedd (Gwynedh) is the ancient and native appellation for North Wales, sometimes including, and sometimes distinguished from, Powys. For a further account of the localities mentioned in the Paper, the reader is referred to the topographical index, which has been added at the end of the volume.

It is a sheer waste of time to apologize for obvious imperfections; yet it may be lawful to urge in palliation of the particular imputations of obscurity and unmethodical arrangement, to which many parts of this Paper are liable, that the whole theory had to be made out piecemeal, and that in fact a great part of it was made out after portions had been committed to writing, or were actually in print. Something may be pardoned in the exposition of a view, which has been gradually evolved by a process not altogether unlike the complex act of sense, reason and imagination, described in the motto on the title-page.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE,
NOVEMBER 15, 1850.

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VESTIGES OF THE GAEL.

§ I.—LOSS OF ANCIENT NAMES.

The question of the primeval occupations of a country is among the most directly and purely interesting of any which its present inhabitants can entertain. It is of direct interest, because it is *their* country. The vales which they inhabit—the fields which yield them sustenance—the fertilizing streams—the mighty hills which they are taught to look upon as types of permanence, and that which is at once the bulwark of their liberty, and the channel of their civilization, the universal ocean—all familiar objects, whose names are to them as household words, and possibly those very names themselves were the birth-right of a race which has passed away, it may be, from the face of the earth, leaving not a memorial of its existence, or only the very faintest traces. Moreover, the interest of the question is intense, in proportion to the obscurity of the indications by which we have to determine it. We all know the excitement of curiosity—the attractiveness of mystery—the pleasure which men feel in reconstructing a bygone state of things out of its scattered fragments—the charm of disinterested suspense, and the satisfaction of successful ingenuity.

These, and other similar elements, combine to augment the interest we feel in prosecuting inquiries of this nature.

But the question is not only one of direct and intense interest—it is also purely interesting. Subjects of political or practical import have a far higher value than any which can be derived from mere intellectual interest. They can hardly be considered without reference to action; and so far as a question issues in action, we do not call it interesting. To take an illustration from other branches of knowledge: Astronomy is interesting, and Agriculture useful; Geology is interesting to the scientific inquirer, but a matter of business to the miner; while, to every Christian, it is of deep and vital import, as long as its statements either do, or can be supposed to, affect the authenticity of Divine Revelation.

Now, as the intensity of this interest is directly dependent on the obscurity of the memorials, so is its purity indirectly proportioned to the same. For it is hardly possible that the prior occupants of a country, in such an age especially as is necessary for a total change of its inhabitants, should leave behind them plain and authentic records of their existence, without in some way affecting the destinies of their successors, and so passing out of the sphere of historical interest, into that of historical importance. Such records must be the memorials either of stubborn resistance, or of elements absorbed into the supervening system; and neither of these can have taken place without having materially affected that system. Thus, the very conditions of pure historical interest are identical, in one respect at least, with the conditions of its intensity.

The question which I am now approaching belongs to this class partly, but not wholly. So long as we merely attempt to determine who were our predecessors in the occupation of this country, or whether any such existed, the question is one of extreme and pure interest; but, as soon as we touch on the settlement of our own progenitors in Gwynedd, it assumes at once the form of historical importance. And, as these points cannot be separated, I shall solicit your attention to the subject, regarded under the twofold aspect of importance and interest. As a matter of fact, these points cannot be considered separately, because we have generally taken it for granted that the present inhabitants of this country have dwelt in it from the beginning. If they had believed and avowed themselves to be invaders and interlopers, the history of the aborigines might have formed an amusing speculation, whereas, at present, it is necessarily mixed up with many practical questions.

The case stands thus at present. As in England people are apt to regard the Roman dominion, the Saxon immigration, and the Norman conquest, as events differing not at all in kind, and perhaps hardly in degree, so have we tacitly acquiesced in the belief that we are an aboriginal nation. But surely this ought not to be assumed until it has been proved. As far as I know, the position has never been proved, and though generally believed, has been occasionally impugned: I trust, therefore, I shall not be deemed an audacious innovator, or maintainer of paradoxes, for again bringing it into question.

In reading the histories of Cæsar and Tacitus, the

geographies of Strabo, Ptolemy, and Pomponius Mela, the Itinerary of Antoninus, and that of Richard of Cirencester, we are met at once by the patent fact, that a great and sweeping change has passed upon the names of localities within this island. Compare the case of France, and the fact becomes evident. The names of the many nations who dwelt from the Rhine to the Atlantic, from the Mediterranean to the German Ocean, have not yet been extinguished. The various tribes who submitted to or resisted the dominion of the Cæsars, have mostly left memorials of their independence in the names of the great provincial towns. The appellations of natural objects, of rivers and mountains, are unchanged except by time. And yet that country has experienced mighty revolutions. The Romans had changed its language and its character. Huns and Saracens have swept over it. Franks and Visigoths have occupied it. But, for all this, men continue to hand down the memory of those ancient people, by an unconscious but everlasting testimony.

I need not say that our case is far different. London and York, the Severn and the Thames, a few natural objects, and a few time-honoured cities, retain the names by which they were known to the Romans; but, of the Trinobantes, the Iceni, and the Brigantes, the nations of Cartismandua, Boadicea, and Cassivellaunus, every trace has long since been obliterated, and their exact position is a matter of historical inquiry. It will be said that the Teutonic immigration into Britain was a far more complete and decisive change than the corresponding event in Gaul. The assertion is undeniable, and scarcely needs any further confirmation than the fact that English is

spoken in one country, and French in the other. But this brings us to the very point at issue. If in England the ancient names have been blotted out one after another by the victorious Saxons, what has been done in this country, where, according to the popular view, no change whatever has taken place? We have here, as it seems, a crucial instance to try the question by. If our local names remain unaltered, as in France, it is probable that there has been no change in our population, or a very trifling one. If they have been generally effaced, as in England, there is a strong presumption in favour of the influx of some external element.

Our authorities on this head may be arranged in four classes. In the first, we place Cæsar, as an eye-witness; in the second, Tacitus, as an historian of the first reputation. Then come the Itinerary of Antoninus, and the geographers Strabo, Ptolemy, and Pomponius Mela. The fourth place is reserved for Richard of Cirencester. But, of these, four only bear upon the present question, and we may regard their authority as varying in the order of enumeration. These are Tacitus, Ptolemy, Antoninus, and Richard the Monk.

§ II.—ANCIENT AUTHORITIES.

We will begin with Tacitus. In the Annals we meet with the river Sabrina,[1] and the tribe of Silures,[2] in South Wales; and, in North Wales, the nations of the Ordovices[3] and Cangi, the latter of whom he describes as

[1] Tac. Ann., xii., c. 31 [2] *Ibid.*, c. 33, 38, 39, &c., xiv., 29.
[3] *Ibid.*, xii., c. 33. Agric., c. 17.

not far from the sea on the side of Ireland,[4] together with the island of Mona.[5] Of the southern names, the one is obviously retained in the Severn, the other less obviously in the old Welsh name for the south-eastern part of the Principality—Essyllwg. Of the northern names, that of Mona alone remains.

Antoninus presents us with the following names of stations in North Wales:—

Segontium, on the *Seiont;*
Conovium, on the *Conway;*
Varis,[6] near Bod-*fari;*
Deva, Chester on the *Dee;*[7]
Bravinium;[8]
Bovium;
Mediolanum;
Rutunium.[9]

The last four names are entirely lost. In South Wales we find:—

Leucarum, *Loughor* on the *Llychwr;*
Nidum, *Neath* on the *Nedd;*
Bomium (Bovium), *Boverton* (?);
Isca Leg. II. Augusta. Caerleon on the *Usk;*
Burrium;
Gobannium, *Abergavenny* on the *Gavenny;*
Magna;[1]
Venta Silurum, Caer-*went* in *Gwent.*

Burrium and Magna are lost; the latter is possibly a Latin name.

[4] "Haud procul mari quod Hiberniam aspectat."

[5] Ann., xiv., c. 29. Agric., c. 17. Mona is also mentioned by Cæsar and Pliny.

[6] Varis is a dative plural; it does not appear what the real name was.

[7] Itinerary, xi. [8] *Ibid.*, xii. [9] *Ibid.*, ii. [1] *Ibid.*, xii.

Ptolemy enumerates the natural objects, proceeding southwards along the coast; they occur in the following order:—The estuary of Seteia, the river Tisobis, the promontory of the Cangani, the rivers Stucia and Tuerobis, the promontory Octapitarum, the rivers Tobius and Rhatostathybius, and the estuary of Sabriana.[2] The position assigned to the Cangi by Tacitus, and to the Cangani by Richard of Cirencester, makes it clear that the three localities first enumerated are in North Wales; and it is equally clear, from the probable identification of the headland of Octapitarum, or Octorupium, with St. David's Head, that the four last named places are in South Wales. The former are altogether lost; while, of the latter, two can easily be identified with the Tywy and the Severn. Octapitarum is apparently a foreign word. The two intervening names, Stucia and Tuerobis, can only be identified with the Ystwyth and Teifi, both in South Wales.[3] This author mentions the Ordovices in

[2] Σετήϊα εἴςχυσις.
Τοισόβιος ποτ. ἐκβολαί.
Καγκανῶν (var. l. Γαγγανῶν) ἄκρον.
Στούκια ποτ. ἐκβολαί.
Τουερόβιος ποτ. ἐκβολαί.
Ὀκταπίταρον ἄκρον.
Τοβίου (var. l. Τουβίου) ποτ. ἐκβολαί.
Ῥατοςταθυβίου ποτ. ἐκβολαί.
Σαβριάνα εἴςχυσις (var. l. Σαβριαναὶς χύσις.)
I observe that, in the notes to the Iolo MSS., Rhatostathybius, or Rhatostaubius, is identified with the Tâf, or Tibia Amnis. It is explained Rhath Taf—the Taff moorland. Rhath, or Roath, is a place contiguous to Cardiff.—p. 374, *Note.* Baxter assigns to it the same locality, though not the same signification.—*Glos. Ant. Brit., sub voce.*

[3] It is true that these rivers were included in a district which we shall presently have to regard as part of North Wales; but it will appear that this district was probably conquered at a very early period.

North Wales, and apparently includes among them the Cangiani,[4] naming their chief cities Mediolanum and Brannogenium, names altogether lost. In South Wales he places the Demetæ to the west, their towns being Loventium and Maridunum; and the Silures to the east, whose only town is Bullium.[5] The Demetæ and Maridunum are Dyfed and Caermarthen; Loventium is supposed to be Llanio, and Bullium has been identified with Builth.

We now bid farewell to ancient authors, and turn to Richard of Cirencester—a writer more copious, but of less authority. The following North-Welsh names occur in his "Itinerary":—

Banchorium, *Bangor* Iscoed;
Deva Colonia;
Varis;
Conovium;
Segontium;[6]
Heriri Mons;
Mediolanum;
Rutunium;
Branogenium.[7]

The only new names here are Banchorium and Heriri Mons. The former is so obviously late a name, that it must be cut off as being fictitious, or, at all events, foreign to our purpose. The latter is placed near Trawsfynydd. In the South we meet with—

[4] Ὑπὸ δὲ τούτους καὶ τοὺς Βρίγαντας οἰκοῦσι δυσμικώτατα μὲν Ὀρδούικες ἐν οἷς πόλεις Μεδιολάνιον, Βραννογένιον.—*Ibid.*

[5] Πάλιν δ' ὑπὸ τὰ εἰρημένα ἔθνη δυσμικώτατοι μὲν Δήμηται, ἐν οἷς πόλεις Λουέντιον, Μαρίδουνον. Τούτων δ' ἀνατολικώτεροι Σίλυρες, ἐν οἷς πόλις Βούλλιον.

[6] Itinerary, i. [7] *Ibid.*, ii.

Venta Silurum;
Isca Colonia;
Tibia Amnis;
Bovium;
Nidum;
Leucarum;
* * * *
Ad Vigesimum;
Ad Menapiam;[8]
Bultrum, or Ballium;[9]
Gobannium;
Magna.[1]

The new names, Tibia Amnis, and Menapia, are the Tâf, and St. David's, or Mynyw.

In his treatise "De Situ Britanniæ," Richard enumerates the following places:—Sariconium (Ross), Magna, Gobaneum, Venta, Isca, among the Silures;[2] Octorupium Promontorium, Menapia, Muridunum, and Lovantium, among the Demetæ, or, as he calls them, Demeciæ.[3] In the country of the Ordovices he places Mediolanum and Brannogenium,[4] and among the Cangiani, who dwelt beyond the last named race, Segontium[5] as their only town, the isle of Mona, the Fretum Meneviacum, or Menai Strait, the rivers Deva and Canovius, or Tossibus, and the mountain of Eriri.[6] He thus appears to identify the

[8] Itinerary, iii. [9] *Ibid.*, xiii., xiv. [1] *Ibid.*, xiii.
[2] De Situ Brit., i., c. 6, § 22. [3] *Ibid.*, § 24. [4] *Ibid.*
[5] "Huc quoque referendum illud, quod a Septentrione Ordovicum situm ab Oceano alluitur, cum illorum regimini quondam fuerit subjectum: hoc certo constat quod illum Cangiani quondam inhabitaverint tractum, quorum urbs unica Segontium promontorio Cangano vicina."—*De Situ Brit.*, i., c. 6, § 25. It is to be observed that the worthy monk invariably places the north where the west ought to be.
[6] *Ibid.*

Conway with the Tisobis of Ptolemy, and seems to indicate, by placing the Dee within the territory of the Cangiani, that they occupied at one period a large portion of North Wales.

It will be as well to present the results of this examination in a tabular form. The names given by these several authorities remain in the following proportions:[7]—

		Tacitus.	Antoninus.	Ptolemy.	Richard.	Added by Richard.	Total.
Nations.	N. W.	0/2		0/1	0/2		0/2
	S. W.	1/1	1/1	2/2	2/2		2/2
Towns.	N. W.		4/8	0/2	4/8	0/1	4/9
	S. W.		6/7	3/3	11/12	2/3	9/13
Natural objects.	N. W.	1/1		0/3	5/6	4/4	5/8
	S. W.	1/1		4/5			4/5
Total.	N. W.	1/3	4/8	0/6	9/16	4/5	10/19
	S. W.	2/2	7/8	9/10	13/14	2/3	15/20

Before making any remarks upon this table, it will be

[7] The proportion of names remaining has been thrown into a fractional form; the number of names recorded is indicated by the denominator, while the numerator shows how many remain.

necessary to premise that the name of Banchorium[8] has been omitted in the calculations, for reasons already alleged, and those of Octapitarum and Ad Vigesimum, as being foreign names. The name of Magna is omitted, partly on that account, and partly because the district in which it stands has been wholly Anglicised, and the place itself has assumed the English name of Kentchester. The general result is that, whereas in North Wales one-half of the ancient names of places are preserved, three-fourths remain in South Wales. But, if we subtract the additions of Richard of Cirencester, we have, in North Wales, only six out of fourteen names remaining—in South Wales, thirteen out of seventeen. Again, of the names surviving in North Wales, the largest proportion are those of natural objects, which we should always expect to be the most permanent, and the remainder are those of towns or stations preserved in the appellations of the rivers on whose banks they stood. The most important conclusion of all is, that the names of the two races which inhabited North Wales, the Ordovices and Cangi, or Cangiani, are utterly lost, while those of the Demetæ and Silures, the inhabitants of the South, are preserved among us.

Now these considerations suggest the probability of a revolution of some kind among the inhabitants of Gwynedd, since the close, or, at all events, since the commencement, of the Roman domination in Britain. The nature or extent of such a revolution is a further question ; all that can be said at present is, that it would

[8] Banchorium and Deva are placed by Richard in the territory of the Carnabii.—*De Situ Brit.*, i., c. 6, § 27.

seem to have involved a total or partial change of the population, and to have been at least so far complete, as to have obliterated a large proportion of the local names. And this probability is heightened, when we remember that we have to account for the introduction of a wholly new name into North Wales, I mean that of Gwynedd. The designation of Genania, although applied to this country, with some degree of hesitation, by Richard of Cirencester,[9] can hardly be a latinized form of Gwynedd, the first two letters of which are invariably represented by V in Latin, as well by the later writers, who use the form Venedocia, and by the Romans themselves in writing other British names—as Venta for Gwent. It is also worthy of notice that, whereas Richard applies the name of Genania to a district much more extensive than any to which that of Gwynedd was ever applied, there is reason to think that Gwynedd was formerly used in a more limited sense than afterwards.

§ III.—TRADITIONAL EVIDENCE.

It is true that the probability does not amount to more than a presumption, and that we have to look for other evidence as well to confirm as to explain it. Such evidence is by no means wanting, although the documents on which it rests are obscure, and often contradictory. Nevertheless, there is quite enough to assure us that a change, of which it is not easy to measure either

9 "Ordovicia una cum Cangiorum Carnabiorumque regionibus, ni fama me fallit, nomine Genaniæ sub imperatoribus post Trajani principatum inclarescebat."—*De Situ Brit.*, i., c. 6, § 25.

the extent or the degree, came over the population of Gwynedd, at some period subsequent to the commencement of the Roman dominion in Britain. The first notice we have of the event is to be found in the Triads, which, after enumerating the various races which had settled at different periods in our island, reckon among "the three invading tribes that came into the isle of Britain, and departed from it, ... the hosts of Ganfael Wyddel, who came to Gwynedd, and were there twenty-nine years, until they were driven into the sea by Caswallawn the son of Beli, the son of Manogan."[1] I call this the first notice of this event, because it is the earliest that occurs in the Triads, which are allowed to contain the earliest native authorities on ancient British history. Another Triad enumerates, among "the three dreadful pestilences of the isle of Britain, the pestilence from the carcases of the Gwyddyl, who were slain in Manuba, after they had oppressed the country of Gwynedd for twenty-nine years."[2] It is evident that these documents relate to the same transaction, and we gather from them that North Wales, or some part of it, was under the dominion of a people called Gwyddyl, for twenty-nine years, who were finally expelled by Caswallawn, or Cassivellaunus, the opponent of Julius Cæsar. The name Gwyddel is to this day applied to the Irish, and is, etymologically, the same as Gael,[3] the common name of the Irish, and Highlanders of Scotland.[4]

[1] Trioedd Ynys Prydain. Myv. Arch., vol. ii., p. 58.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[3] The latter word is spelt *Gaoidheal*, the soft consonant being elided in pronounciation.

[4] It may be necessary to state distinctly the precise significations in

All that we are justified in concluding from the name is, that these occupants were a Gaelic race of some kind or other. In another Triad we meet with a curious allusion to a similar event, which must have occurred at a much later period. "The tribe of Caswallawn Law Hir put the fetters of their horses on their feet by two and two, in fighting with Serigi Wyddel, at Cerrig y Gwyddel, in Mon."[5]

In the Historia Britonum, attributed to Nennius, we meet with another account of the expulsion of the Gael. He informs us that Cunedda and his eight sons came from the north, from a province known as Manau Guotodin, and expelled the Scots from Gwynedd, Dyfed,

which the terms "Celtic," "Gaelic," &c., are used; especially as some confusion exists in people's minds on the subject. The common name of Celtic is applied to all and each of the members of a family of nations, distinguished by certain phenomena of language and organization. This is the ethnological use of the term, and is the result of a generalization from existing facts. It must carefully be distinguished from the historical use of the term, as applied to a race whom the Greeks and Romans found in various parts of western Europe. Whether the historical Celts were Celtic in our use of the word, *i. e.*, whether they possessed the distinctive marks of language and organization, it is one of the problems of ethnology to determine. Now this Celtic family is found to divide itself into two branches, one of which, at present occupying the Highlands, Hebrides, Man, and a great part of Ireland, in a tolerably pure state, is called Gaelic. The other, in possession of Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany, is here, as elsewhere, for convenience, denominated Cymraic. A closer connexion is found to subsist between the Bretons and Cornish, than between either of those people and the Welsh. These facts are stated here, to avoid needless verbal discussion; although they must be familiar to the majority of my readers. Those who wish to see the subject of Celtic ethnology clearly drawn out, will do well to read Dr. Prichard's "Essay on the Eastern origin of the Celtic Languages;" and a memoir, by M. Adolphe Pictet, "De l'affinité des Langues Celtiques avec le Sanscrit."

[5] Myv. Arch., p. 62.

and from the districts of Gower and Kidwelly.[6] Their expulsion is placed about the close of the fourth century, and, although the date of their immigration is not stated, we are left to infer that it was synchronical with the occupation of Dalriada and Man by their countrymen.[7] To the testimony of Nennius we may add that of Rhyddmarch, the author of the life of St. David, as a writer whose date we are able to fix. He speaks of the Saint being persecuted, in his hallowed retreat at Menevia, by a certain Scottish tyrant, by name Boia, who had built himself a strong castle, overlooking the Rosy Vale, in which St. David had establised himself with his companions.[8] The name of this regulus is preserved in Clegyr Foia, a precipitous volcanic rock, surmounted by

[6] "Novissime venit Damhoctor, et ibi habitavit cum omni genere suo usque hodie in Brittanniam. Istorith, Istorini filius, tenuit Dalrieta cum suis; Builc autem cum suis tenuit Euboniam insulam, et alias circiter; filii autem Liethan obtinuerunt in regione Demetorum et in aliis regionibus, id est, Guir et Cetgueli, donec expulsi sunt a Cuneda et a filiis ejus ab omnibus Brittanicis regionibus."—*Hist. Brit.*, § 14. "Mailcunus magnus rex apud Brittones regnabat, id est, in regione Guenedotæ, quia atavus illius, id est, Cunedag, cum filiis suis, quorum numerus octo erat, venerat prius de parte sinistrali, id est, de regione quæ vocatur Manau Guotodin, centum quadraginta sex annis antequam Mailcum regnaret, et Scottos cum ingentissima clade expulerunt ab istis regionibus, et nusquam reversi sunt ad habitandum."—*Ibid.*, § 62.

[7] Nennius, on the authority of the "peritissimi Scottorum," places the migration of the Scots from Ireland to Dalriada, in the sixth century B.C., that is to say, in the present case, in a period anterior to history. Mr. Skene, in his ingenious Essay on the Highlanders, dates the last occupation of Dalriada, A.D. 503, and appears to consider the earlier migrations as fabulous.—Vol. i., pp. 15–20.

[8] Ricemarus in Vita Sti Davidis apud Whart. Angl. Sacr. II. Giraldus omits the words "Scottus quidam," which are supplied by Wharton in the margin. Rhyddmarch lived in the eleventh century.

an ancient earth-work, within a quarter of a mile of St. David's. Perhaps this is the proper place to observe that the Menapii are placed by Ptolemy and Richard on the coast of Ireland, immediately opposite to St. David's Head,[9] so that it is easy to imagine the settlement of a section of this tribe on the opposite shore of Menevia, or Menapia. William of Malmesbury, in his History of Glastonbury, gives us a rather more detailed account of the event recorded by Nennius. He confirms the statements of that writer, and of Rhyddmarch, by informing us that the Gael were expelled from Dyfed, as well as Gwynedd.[1]

The scanty notices we have already met with concur in recording the settlement of Gaelic tribes, at an unknown period, in various parts of Wales, especially in Gwynedd, and their expulsion on one, or more than one, occasion, attributed variously to Caswallawn the son of Beli, to Caswallawn Law Hir, and the family of Cunedda. We must now turn to another quarter for more detailed information with respect to the Gaelic dominion in Wales. It is to be found in the valuable Miscellany collected by the late Iolo Morganwg, and recently published by the Welsh MSS. Society. The notices which it gives us on this subject are fuller than those which have already been produced, and serve in many instances to explain them; on the other hand, it must be owned that they frequently contradict each other, and rest, of course, on comparatively slender authority.[2] I

[9] They are called by Ptolemy, Μανάπιοι.

[1] Gale, Scriptores, vol. i., p. 295.

[2] I am content to take these documents at the lowest value that can

shall give some of the more explicit of these memorials in full, and proceed to harmonise them as far as it is possible :—

"Three Irish invasions took place in Cambria; and one family, that of Cuneddaf Wledig, delivered the country from the three. The first occurred in Gower, in Glamorgan, where Caian Wyddel and his sons landed, subjugated the country, and ruled it for eight years; but Cuneddaf Wledig, and Urien the son of Cynfarch, subdued and slew them to nine, whom they drove into the sea; and the government of the country was conferred on Urien the son of Cynfarch, having been constituted a kingdom for that purpose, and called Rheged, because it was bestowed unanimously by its ancient British inhabitants on Urien, in free gift, whence he was called Urien Rheged.[3]

"The second invasion was that of Aflech Goronog, who seized upon Garth Mathrin by irruption; but, having married Marchell, the daughter of Tewdrig, king of that district, he acquired the good will of its inhabitants, and obtained the country in marriage settlement with his wife; and there his descendants still remain, intermixed with the natives."

"The third invasion was that of Don (others say Daronwy), king of Lochlyn (Scandinavia), who came to Ireland, and conquered it; after which he led sixty thousand Irish and Lochlynians to North Wales, where they ruled for one hundred and twenty-nine years; when Caswallawn Law Hir the son of Einion Yrth, the son of Cunedda Wledig, entered Mona, wrested the country from them, and slew Serigi Wyddel, their ruler, at a

be put upon them, as the weight of my proof does not rest upon the authority of individual passages, but upon the coincidence of a large number, and indeed, as will be seen, upon their very discrepancies—an authority which cannot well be destroyed, except by the supposition of an actual forgery.

[3] In the published translation which I have elsewhere followed, the last sentence runs thus:—"whence *it* was called Urien Rheged." It is probably an error of the press.

place called Llan-y-Gwyddyl, in Mona. Other sons of Cuneddaf Wledig slew them also in North Wales, the Cantred, and Powis, and became princes of those countries. Don had a son called Gwydion, king of Mona and Arvon, who first taught literature from books to the Irish of Mona and Ireland; whereupon both these countries became pre-eminently famed for knowledge and saints."[4]

The next history is at variance with the last, and with itself: its chronology is altogether hopeless:—

"A.D. 267, Don, king of Lochlyn and Dublin, led the Irish to Gwynedd, where they remained one hundred and twenty-nine years. Gwydion the son of Don was highly celebrated for knowledge and science. He was the first who taught the Cambro-Britons to perform the plays of illusion and phantasm, and introduced the knowledge of letters to Ireland and Lochlyn; but after the Irish and Lochlynians had inhabited North Wales for one hundred and twenty-nine years, the sons of Cuneddaf Wledig came there from the north, overcame the Irish and their confederates, and drove them in flight to the Isle of Man. They were slaughtered at the battle of Cerrig y Gwyddyl; and Caswallawn Law Hir, with his own sword, killed Serigi Wyddel the son of Mwrchan, the son of Eurnach the Aged, the son of Eilo, the son of Rhechgyr, the son of Cathbalig, the son of Cathal, the son of Machno, the son of Einion, the son of Celert, the son of Math, the son of Mathonwy, the son of Gwydion, the son of Don, king of Mona and Arvon, the Cantred, and of Dublin and Lochlyn, who came to the isle of Mona one hundred and twenty-nine years before the incarnation of Christ.

"Eurnach the Aged fought, sword to sword, with Owen Finddu, the son of Maxen Wledig, in the city of Ffaraon; and he slew Owen, who also slew him."[5]

I should be glad to know whether these can be regarded as perversions of Gaelic names. Again,—

[4] Iolo MSS., p. 467. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 471.

"After the departure of the Romans from Britain, Serigi took upon him the supreme government of Mona, Gwynedd, and the Cantred; but so excessive was the oppression of the Irish there that messengers were sent to Cuneddaf Wledig, who dispatched his sons to Gwynedd, and they put them to flight; except in Mona, where they had become a distinct nation, with Serigi for their king, who came with a strong force to Gwyrfai, in Arfon, to fight against Caswallawn, who drove them back to Mona, where they were slain at a place called Cerrig y Gwyddyl; whereupon Caswallawn, and the family of Cuneddaf, placed saints in that island, to teach the Christian faith there, and bestowed lands on the Cambro-British, who were brought there from Dyfed, Gower and Gwent; so that Mona became celebrated for its saints, wise men, and pious persons."[6]

I shall add two more,—

"Gwydion Wyddel, the son of Don, the son of Dar, the son of Daronwy, the son of Urnach Wyddel, of the city of Ffaraon, was slain by Owen Finddu the son of Maxen Wledig; this Urnach led twenty thousand Irish from Ireland to Gwynedd, where they landed, and where they and their descendants remained for one hundred and twenty-nine years.

"The son of Urnach was Serigi Wyddel, who was slain at Cerrig y Gwyddyl, in Mona, by Caswallawn Law Hir the son of Einion Yrth, the son of Cuneddaf Wledig, in the time of Owen the son of Maxen Wledig; and upon the greensward they found a male infant, who was Daronwy the son of Urnach Wyddel, Serigi's brother, of the city of Ffaraon. An illustrious chieftain who resided just by, commiserating his beauty and destitution, reared him up as one of his children; but he became eventually one of three native oppressors; for he confederated with the Irish, and seized the dominion from its rightful Cambro-British owners, namely,[7]—"

And this,—

[6] Iolo MSS., p. 471. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 472.

"Saint Gynyr of Caer Gawch the son of Gwyndeg, the son of Saithenyn, king of Maes Gwyddno, whose land was overflowed by the sea, the son of Saithenyn Hen, the son of Plaws Hen, king of Dyfed, the son of Gwrtherin, a prince of Rome, who expelled the Gwydelians from Dyfed and Gower.

"Meyrig, king of Dyfed, the son of Gwrthelin, the son of Eudaf, the son of Plaws Hen, king of Dyfed, the son of Gwrtherin, a nobleman of Rome, who expelled the Gwyddelians from Gower and Dyfed."[8]

The notices before us, however discordant in detail, coincide in the main, both with each other, and with those which were cited before. They agree so far in their general purport that we cannot doubt their relating to the same event, while they are so contradictory in minor points as to prove, beyond question, the antiquity of the original legend which is embodied in them. Thus their very discrepancies are a confirmation of their general authenticity, and at the same time allow us a considerable latitude in interpreting them. It is evident then that a tribe of Picts or Scots were in possession of several portions of Wales, in an age within the domain of history;[9] that they had settlements in the country between the Neath and the Tywy,[1] in Brecknockshire,[2] and probably

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 545. Achau y Saint.

[9] It is not necessary here to decide whether the Gael of North Wales were Picts or Scots, or, indeed, whether the Picts were Gael or Celts at all. This has been, as is well known, the *vexata quæstio* of Scottish antiquaries for many years. Those who wish for specimens of the spirit in which it has been discussed, will do well to read the quarrel between Monkbarns and Sir Arthur Wardour, in the "Antiquary," or (if they prefer reality to fiction) Ritson's Annals of the Caledonians.

[1] See Nennius, as already quoted. See also Iolo MSS., pp. 456-7.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 467. Cf., p. 517.—"Marchell, the daughter of Tewdrig,

in western Pembrokeshire;[3] but that their principal territory was in North Wales, the whole, or a large portion, of which they occupied at an early period, where their power was not entirely extinguished until the fifth century. We are presented with lists and genealogies of their kings and leaders, contradictory to the last degree, and yet, as it seems, containing germs of truth. The Brecknockshire colony was governed by one Aflech, that in Gower by a person variously designated as Caian,[4] Glaian,[5] and Liethan[6]—distinct forms, as it would seem, of the same name. In another document, the Gael of Gower are said to have been led by Gilmwr Rechdyr.[7] But it is concerning the Gael of Gwynedd that we have the most copious information, and it is to them that our attention must be principally directed. We have a multiplicity of accounts concerning their original settlement in the country, but they may be reduced to three several legends.

The first is derived from a source we have not hitherto touched. In the genealogy of Iestyn ab Gwrgant[8] we are informed that, in the reign of "Annyn the Rugged the son of Alafon," a prince of Siluria, seven or eight generations before the Roman invasion, a people whom it calls "y Ddraig Estron," or the "dragon strangers,"[9]

was the wife of Anllech Goronog, who was king of Ireland, and their son was called Brychan, and he had in right of his mother the territory of Garth Mathrin, which he called after his own name, Brycheiniog."

[3] See above, pp. 15, 16.

[4] Iolo MSS., p. 467.

[5] Glaian Eedawr, *ibid.*, p. 458.

[6] Nennius, *ut supra.*

[7] Iolo MSS., p. 457.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 341.—This document is not cited as an authority, but as containing a legend different from any that we have met with.

[9] The appellation is a curious one, but it may serve to interpret

came to Britain and Ireland: "they are now become quite extinct in this island, although they still entirely possess Ireland, where they are termed Gwyddelians." It would appear at first sight that this notice refers only to the settlement of the Gael in North Britain, an event commemorated in various Triads, and placed at a very early period; but the assertion that their descendants were extinct in this island—having, of necessity, reference to the southern portion of it—makes it probable that the history speaks of a Gaelic colony in Gwynedd at this early period. And this is confirmed by various passages in the same document. It informs us that, in the reign of the same Annyn, "a new king sprang up in Gwynedd, in utter violation of justice;"[1] that the king of Gwynedd was conquered by Lleyn, a descendant of Annyn, who gave name to the country;[2] that the war in Gwynedd was continued by Tegid, the brother and successor of Lleyn,[3] and that a third brother, Llyr, the grandfather of the great Caractacus, finally expelled the Gael from Gwynedd.[4]

The second legend is that presented to us in the Triads,

certain obscure passages of Welsh tradition. In one of the Triads the "Dragon of Britain" is described as one of the "oppressions of the isle of Britain."—*Myv. Arch.*, ii., p. 59. In the Mabinogi of Lludd and Llefelys, Britain is visited by three simultaneous afflictions, one of which is, the invasion of the Coritani, and another, the conflict of two dragons, which are ultimately buried in Dinas Ffaraon, subsequently the metropolis of the Gael. The title of Draig appears to have been afterwards applied to the Welsh princes of Gwynedd. Gildas calls Maelgwyn "draco insularis," and Gwalchmai applies to Owen Gwynedd the title of "Dragon of Mona."—*Evans' Specimens of Welsh Bards*, p. 127.

[1] Iolo MSS., p. 341. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 346. [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*

which places the invasion of the Gael, under Ganfael, shortly before the Roman invasion, and attributes their expulsion, after a short domination of twenty-nine years, to Caswallawn the son of Beli.[5]

The third legend is that of which we have given specimens already. It generally describes the invaders as led by Don the son of Daronwy, who is represented as a Scandinavian settler in Ireland. They are in possession of the country for a hundred and twenty-nine years, although other accounts abbreviate the period to twenty-nine, while another extends it to three hundred and twenty-nine.[6] Among their princes we meet with various names distinguished in Welsh romance, Gwydion the son of Don, Arianrod his sister, Math the son of Mathonwy, the Palug Cat, with other personages wearing a very mythological aspect. Gwydion is invariably represented as a wise man, and sometimes as a wizard. In one Triad he is said to have learned illusion from Math ab Mathonwy, who is denominated one of the three "men of illusion and phantasy."[7] The Mabinogi of Math gives us a specimen of his performances, and those of his instructor; and we are elsewhere informed that his magic sleights secured him the possession of his principality.[8] Another Triad unites him with Idris the Giant, and Gwyn the son of Nudd, under the class of chief astronomers.[9] Elsewhere we are told that he was highly celebrated for knowledge and sciences, that he introduced the knowledge of letters to Ireland and Lochlyn,[1] and to

[5] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 58.
[6] Iolo MSS., p. 609.
[7] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 71.
[8] Iolo MSS., p. 421.
[9] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 71.
[1] Iolo MSS., p. 267.

the Irish of Mona, whereupon these countries (Ireland and Anglesey) became pre-eminently famed for knowledge and saints.[2] His court was the resort of bards and philosophers, and was visited by Merddyn,[3] as that of his son was by Taliesin.[4] Both of these assertions, it is needless to say, are palpable anachronisms; but they show the light in which Gwydion was regarded in later times. An obscure memorial of him in the Achau Saint[5] appears to imply that he was the means of converting the Gael of Gwynedd to Christianity, and connects him in some way with the Pelagian heresy. But he appears elsewhere in a more marvellous form. His path is in the sky, and may be seen in the galaxy. His sister, the Lady of the Silver Wheel, holds her court among the stars. On occasion, like Apollo, he plays the part of a herdsman, and keeps thrice seven thousand kine above the Conwy.[6] Enough has been said to show that Gwydion is more than half a mythic character, and that he is the great hero of the Gaelic legend.

Math, whose exact relation to Gwydion it is rather

[2] Iolo MSS., p. 468. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 466. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 467.

[5] "Mor, the son of Morien, brought baptism and faith, and would not bring baptism to the country of Gwynedd. The first that did so was Gwydion, the son of Don, king of Llychlyn, who was king of the country of Gwynedd, during the time the Gwyddelians bore rule in Gwynedd."—*Ibid.*, p. 551.

[6] Trioedd Ynys Prydain. Myv. Arch., ii., p. 10.—"The three herdsmen of tribes of the isle of Britain, . . the second, Gwydion the son of Don, who kept the cattle of the tribe of Gwynedd, above the Conwy; and in this herd were twenty-and-one thousand." Baxter asserts, without giving his authority, that the Cangi were a pastoral race, subject to other tribes.—*Gloss. Ant. Brit.*, p. 73, *sub voce* Ceangi.

difficult to determine, held his court at Caer Dathyl, and carried on a war with the king of Dyfed.[6] Another warrior, Urnach, or Eurnach, the Aged,[7] who in one record is represented as the original invader, and the great-grandfather of Don, is elsewhere described as fighting single-handed with Owen the son of the Emperor Maximus, a contest which was fatal to both. He is also called Brynach, and is said to have been the first king of Gwynedd converted to Christianity.[8] His dominions extended over the western part of North Wales, Mona and Man, and he held his court at Dinas Ffaraon in Snowdon.

His son Serigi closes the list of the Gaelic chiefs of Gwynedd.[9] The Welsh, who had, as it seems, for some time pressed hard upon them, and apparently limited their dominions to Mona, ultimately overcame them, and slew their leader at Holyhead under the command of Caswallawn Law Hir, the grandson of Cunedda Wledig, whose family had emigrated from North Britain for the express purpose of rescuing Wales from the oppression of the invaders.

In the names of Eurnach, Serigi and Caswallawn, we seem to have an approach to authentic history; and we may perhaps conclude that, as far at least as the termination of their empire is concerned, this legend gives us the real account. We can hardly doubt that the story which ascribes their expulsion to the celebrated Cassivellaunus arises merely from the confusion of two personages bearing the same name; and the legend referred

[6] Mabinogi of Math. [7] Iolo MSS., p. 471. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 474.
[9] One legend ascribes the original invasion to Serigi.

to in the genealogy of Iestyn is probably an even more corrupted form of the present one.

§ IV.—CHRONOLOGY.

Before we proceed to consider the details of the conquest of Gwynedd by the family of Cunedda, it will be well to examine the chronology of their occupation and evacuation of that country by the Gwyddyl—to see, in fact, whether anything can be made of it. We will assume that the termination of their dominion is fixed by the accession of Caswallawn Law Hir, who is said to have reigned over North Wales from 443 to 517. This date is rendered probable by that of his son Maelgwyn, which is better known. The latter was contemporary with Gildas, the first British historian, if he should not rather be called a preacher, who was born about the year 516, and wrote in the middle of the sixth century. For the invasion of the Gwyddyl we find various dates assigned. The genealogy of Iestyn ab Gwrgant places it, as we have seen, at an indefinitely early period.[1] The Triads fix the invasion of Ganfael Wyddel in the first century B.C.[2] A record which we have already quoted[3] fixes the invasion in the year 267 A.D., and, almost in the same breath, in 129 B.C. In another document we find the following chronological notices:—

"In 294 A.D., the Irish Picts, who had migrated from Beitwy, were slain." . . "In 307 a great pestilence prevailed, and a fearful number of full-grown males and females died in consequence, together with more than half the children of the island;

[1] See above, p. 21. [2] p. 13. [3] Iolo MSS., p. 471, cited above, p. 18.

in consequence of which, the invasion of the Irish Picts took place in the north, and that of the pike-bearing Irish and Lochlynians in Anglesea, Arvon, and the Commot." . . "In 314 scarcity and famine took place; the Irish and Lochlynians having spoiled the corn lands." "In 339 many of the Irish banditti were taken." "About this period [A.D. 380] Morien the son of Argad the Bard flourished; . . . he denied Baptism and the Sacrifice, . . whence arose great hatred, contentions, and wars."

We have already seen that Morien was supposed to be contemporary with Gwydion.

"In 400 the Irish Picts came to Cambria, and committed atrocious depredations; but at last they were vanquished, slain unsparingly, and driven back beyond the sea to their original country." "In 410 severe diseases and great mortality prevailed, occasioned by the yellow pestilence, which arose from the dead bodies that remained unburied."

This pestilence is connected with the Gaelic invasion by the Triads.

"In 430 the Irish Picts made a descent on Anglesea and Arvon, and were joined by the Irish of those countries, in combined hostility to the crown of the island of Britain; but they were opposed by the kings and princes of Cambria, whose cause was espoused by the two saints, namely, Germanus and Lupus; and they prayed to God, who . . made them victorious over their enemies." "In 436 . . . a terrible pestilence occurred in Britain; . . whereupon the Irish Picts came to Cambria; but, through the prayers of the saints, they were vanquished."[4]

It is obvious that such circumstantial chronology, in relation to an age of which so little is known, cannot be trusted in detail. In fact, the only positive conclusion

[4] Iolo MSS., pp. 418–422. Cf. Bede, Hist. Eccl. i., c. 20.

which we can draw from it is, that the Irish domination terminated about the middle of the fifth century, that is, about the period assigned to Caswallawn Law Hir. It does not give us a hint of the commencement of their empire, but appears to imply that it was kept up by continual succours from their brethren in Ireland, or elsewhere.[5] We have however further data, as it would appear, for determining the time of their arrival, in the duration of their power, as derived from the Triads and other sources. This we have already seen stated variously as twenty-nine, one hundred and twenty-nine, and three hundred and twenty-nine years. These numbers bear so evident a relation to one another, that they seem clearly to be different versions of the same legend; while they occur in accounts so contradictory, as to prove the antiquity of the legend from which they are derived. They are so circumstantial that they must mean something, while they are far too circumstantial to be received without caution. We may fairly assume that one of the three was found in the original story, and that the others are perversions of it. And we may probably conclude that to be the original number which bears the clearest marks of being artificial, or that which there was most reason to change in subsequent versions of the story. Now it appears more natural to lengthen the period than to shorten it, simply for the purpose of allowing more time for the events which confused traditions, or the ingenuity of poets, had made to occur within it. And the shortest of these periods can with least difficulty be

[5] The events of 430 particularly deserve notice, as the pre-existence of the Gael in Mona and Arvon is expressly mentioned.

regarded as artificial. The partiality of the Welsh for the triad is too well known to need proof, and it would necessarily extend to the number thirty. Now, in twenty-nine, we have three decades *minus* one; or, if we please to put it in this way—the Irish having ruled in Gwynedd for nine-and-twenty years, were driven out in the thirtieth. This view of twenty-nine as a mythical or mystical number, is confirmed in some degree by a curious story published in the Iolo MSS., of "Einion the son of Gwalchmai of Anglesey, and the Lady of the Greenwood, which was a witch, or female goblin, that fascinated him for *nine-and-twenty years*, and of the manner in which he was liberated from the illusions and bands she had cast over him."[6] Nennius also, who delights in triads and round numbers, tells us a story of three sons of a certain knight of Spain, who were utterly destroyed, with nine-and-twenty ships of war, as they were besieging a tower of glass in the middle of the sea.[7] This explanation may appear fanciful to those who are not accustomed to observe the manner in which numbers are manufactured in mythological history. The only object of it is to destroy the apparent credibility of these numbers arising from their extremely circumstantial character, by showing how easy it is to account for their origin. Whether this be the true explanation or not, we may be allowed to have grave doubts as to the value of such precise dates in the history of an age of which so little is really known. The only result, then, of our chronological examination is, that we can have no certain chronology in the matter; that the close of the

[6] Iolo MSS., p. 591.

[7] Nennius, Hist. Brit., § 13.

Gaelic dominion in North Wales took place about the middle of the fifth century; and that we are at liberty to place its commencement in an indefinitely early period. Indeed, we are not without authority for supposing that it took place at a date anterior to any facts recorded in the history of this country.[8] We shall soon see reasons for wishing to extend the duration of their sovereignty beyond the limits, not of the twenty-nine years only, but of the hundred and twenty-nine.

§ V.—EXTENT OF THE GAELIC DOMINION.

We have been occupied with the limits of duration assigned to the Gaelic domination, let us now consider its extent in point of space. I do not now speak of the minor settlements in South Wales, but of that great principality in Gwynedd, of which we may regard Gwydion the son of Don as the mythic representative, and of which Serigi the son of Urnach was the last ruler. The authorities which we have already had occasion to consult, are rather vague in their information as to the limits of their territory. They speak in general terms of an invasion and occupation of Gwynedd,[9] or in more precise language, of Mona, Arvon and the Cantred,[1] which appears to be identical with Merioneth; others speak of Mona, Gwynedd (used, as it would seem, in a limited sense) and the Cantred, or Commot; and one document, which we have already quoted, speaks of their

[8] See above, p. 21.
[9] Trioedd Ynys Pryd. Myv. Arch. ii., p. 58. Iolo MSS., p. 468.
[1] *Ibid.*, 471.

being overcome by the sons of Cunedda, in Mona, Gwynedd, the Cantred and Powys.[2] We also find the isle of Man annexed to their dominions, and spoken of in such a way as to leave no doubt that it formed at one time part of the great principality of Gwynedd.[3] It is to be observed, however, that Mona is spoken of as their principal seat, as it was certainly the district in which they maintained their power to the latest period, and hence in the ordinary histories of Wales their empire is generally spoken of as a temporary occupation of Mona, or at most of Mona and Arvon.[4] We shall be able however to ascertain the limits of their territory with greater accuracy, if we examine the accounts handed down to us of their overthrow and expulsion. The most minute record is contained in the following extract from one of the genealogies termed Achau Saint:[5]—

"Cunedda Wledig sent sons to Gwynedd against the Gwyddelians, which came with Serigi the Gwyddelian, to Anglesey, and other places, and had taken the greatest portion of that country from the inhabitants, when there were no princes over them; and the sons of Cunedda led the Cymry, and expelled the Gwyddelians from the country, and slew them, making prisoners of such as had their lives spared; then the men of Gwynedd gave those princes possession of the lands they had won; namely:—

"Tybiawn the son of Cunedda Wledig, won the Cantref, routing the Gwyddelians, and in that battle he was slain, and the nobles of the country conferred the sovereignty on Meirion his son, and he was called Meirion of Meirionydd.

"Arwystl the son of Cunedda Wledig, won a district, which

[2] Iolo MSS., p. 468. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 474.
[4] It is thus represented by Lhoyd and Warrington.
[5] Iolo MSS., p. 521.

was given him, which he called after his own name, and he himself is called Arwystl of Arwystli.

" Ceredig the son of Cunedda Wledig, expelled the foreigners from the Cantref of Tyno Coch, and received it as an inheritance, and called it Ceredigion after his own name, and he himself is called Ceredig of Ceredigion.

" Dunawd the son of Cunedda Wledig, delivered the Commot of Ardudwy, in Eifionydd, and received it as a possession, and called it Dinodyng after his own name, and he is called Dunawd of Dinodyng.

" Edeyrn the son of Cunedda Wledig, delivered the country, which he called Edeyrnion from his own name, of which he received possession, and he is called Edeyrn of Edeyrnion.

" Mael the son of Cunedda Wledig, had Maelienydd, which he named after his own name, and he is called Mael of Maelienydd, in remembrance of his act in delivering the country.

" Dogvael the son of Cunedda Wledig, had the country called after him Dogveilyng, and he is called Dogvael of Dogveilyng.

" Rhufawn the son of Cunedda Wledig, had the Cantref, which after him was called Rhyfoniog, and he is called Rhufawn of Rhufoniog, and also Rhun Hael of Rhufoniog, because he was the most generous man in Wales in his times.

" Oswal the son of Cunedda Wledig, had the country called after him Osweilyng, and he is called Oswal of Osweiliawn, and that country is the town of Oswestry and its precincts.

" Clwyd the son of Cunedda Wledig, had the vale of Clwyd.

" Cynir, Meilin, and Meigir, the sons of Gwron, the son of Cunedda Wledig, went with Caswallawn Law Hir their cousin to expel the Gwyddelian Picts from the island of Anglesey, where they had fled from the sons of Cunedda, and had established themselves in that island; and after furious fighting they drove the Gwyddelians out of Anglesey, and Caswallawn Law Hir slew Serigi Wyddel there, with his own hand. That Serigi was the prince of the Gwyddelian Picts, which had governed Gwynedd from the time of the Emperor Maximus. And after expelling

the foreigners from Anglesey, the Cymry took courage, and drove them out of every part of Gwynedd, and none of them remained in the country, except such as were made captives for ever. And thus did Cunedda Wledig obtain the sovereignty of Wales, and his sons the lands before mentioned.

"And Caswallawn Law Hir the son of Einion Yrth, the son of Cunedda Wledig, founded a church to God in the place where he obtained a victory over his enemies, and called it Llan y Gwyddyl, and which is in Anglesey, and now called Cerrig y Gwyddyl.

"Einion the king the son of Einion Yrth, the son of Cunedda Wledig. His church is in Lleyn, of which country he was king."

A somewhat different account is given in the description of Wales prefixed to Lhoyd's history :—

"The sons of Cunetha being arriued in North Wales, (as well I thinke being driuen by the Saxons, as for their inheritance,) diuided the countrie betwixt them. And first, Meireaon the sonne of Tibiaon, the sonne of Cunetha, had Cantref Meireaon to his part. Arustel ap Cunetha had Cantref Arustly. Caredic ap Cunetha had Caerdigion, now Caerdigan Shire. Dunod had Cantref Dunodic. Edeyrn had Edeyrnion. Mael had Dynmael. Coel had Coeleyon. Doguael had Dogueilyn. Ryvaon had Ryuonioc, now Denbighland. Eineon Yrth had Caereneon, in Powys. Vssa had Maesvswalht, now Oswestree. . . Maelor the sonne of Gwron, sonne to Cunedha, had Maeloron."[6]

I shall presently have occasion to criticise these passages in detail, and to compare them with other accounts of the same event. My only object in citing them at present is, to show the extent of country over which the Gaelic sway may have extended at various times. It is obvious that the various districts which it enumerates were regarded as the possessions of, and deriving their

[6] This account is adopted in the Hanes Cymru of Carnhuanawc.

appellation from, the legendary heroes of the Cuneddian race, whose names stand at the head of many Welsh genealogies. We may also assume that all the regions connected by tradition with that family were supposed, as they are here asserted, to have been won from the strangers. Now these districts would appear to include the whole of Anglesey, Caernarvon, Merioneth, and Cardiganshire, with a portion at least of Denbighshire, Montgomeryshire, and Radnorshire. It would include the entire coast from the Clwyd to the Teifi,[7] and would be bounded to the east by the Clwydian and Berwyn mountains, and the wild hills of Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire.[8] It would also appear from this document, and others, that their power was more complete, or lasted longer, in some parts than in others, and most of all in Mona, although they continued to exist elsewhere in isolated positions even after the overthrow of Serigi.

This tradition receives a remarkable confirmation from modern topography, a source of historical information to which too little attention has been paid in general, and particularly in the present instance. Rowland, the author of the "Mona Antiqua Restaurata," records the expulsion of the Irish from Anglesey, of which he seems to consider them at one time the sole occupants.[9] He

[7] Since this passage was written, I have been informed that Ceredigion extended to the Preseleu mountains, a fact which the features of the country and the present ecclesiastical divisions had led me to suspect.

[8] Some parts, indeed, of this territory lie beyond the limits we have fixed.

[9] "The Irish, under Sirig the Rover, *who once indeed drove the inhabitants out of the island,* were soon after themselves outed and expelled by Melirion ap Meirchion, and his cousin Caswallawn law

tells us also that the circular foundations of houses, like those in what we are accustomed to call British towns, were ordinarily known as Cytiau r' Gwyddelod, the cabins of the Gael.[1] Yet he does not seem to connect these facts in any way; on the contrary, he has recourse to a very unsatisfactory argument to explain away the apparent connexion. I believe that name is in common use in various parts of North Wales at this day; and one instance certainly exists in Anglesey. But we find in various parts of Wales, the word Gwyddel entering into composition in the local names, frequently in very remarkable positions. I give a list of these which I have been able to discover, and it is probable that more are to be found.*

In Anglesey,—

Porth y Gwyddel, in Holyhead Island;

Pentre Gwyddal, also in Holyhead Island;

Cytiau 'r Gwydd'lod, about a mile to the south of the causeway leading to Holyhead Island.

To these we may add Cerrig y Gwyddel, Llan y Gwyddel, or Capel y Gwyddel, the ancient name of Holyhead.

In Caernarvonshire,—

Pentre Gwyddel, on the shore between Conway and Abergele;

Bwlch y Gwyddel, between Capel Curig and Llanberis;

Mynydd y Gwyddel; and,

Trwyn y Gwyddel, at the extreme promontory of Lleyn.

hir, who killed the said Sirig, at a place called Cappel Gwyddil as tradition hath it."—p. 37.

[1] "There are, to this day, visible upon our heaths and *Rhosydh*, the marks and footsteps of these booths and cabbins, in the oval and circular trenches which are seen in great plenty dispersed here and there on such grounds . . . they are called Cyttie r' gwyddelod, viz., the Irish men's cottages."—p. 27.

In Merionethshire,—

Muriau 'r Gwyddelod, ancient fortifications near Harlech;

Muriau 'r Gwddel, near Maentwrog;

Gwyddel-fynydd near Towyn;

Gwyddel-wern.

In Montgomeryshire,—

Dol-y-Gwyddyl, in the hills between Machynlleth and Llanidloes.

In Radnorshire,—

Crugyn Gwyddel, in the mountainous district west of Rhayader.

In Cardiganshire,—

Waun y Gwyddel; and,

Nant y Gwyddel, about six miles west of Plinlimon;

Wern y Gwyddel near Tregaron;

Llwyn y Gwyddyl, near the ruins of Strata Florida;[2]

Cefn Gwyddel, near the sea-coast, at no great distance from New Quay; a farm in the neighbourhood bears the significant name of Lletty 'r Cymro;

Pant yr Wyddeles, four or five miles from the place last mentioned, but further inland.

In Pembrokeshire,—

Trewyddel, on the coast between Cardigan and Newport;

Llwyn Gwyddel; and,

Pant Gwyddel, both a little to the south of the Preseleu mountains.

In Glamorganshire,—

Twll y Gwyddel, in the hills separating the vales of the Tawe and Llychwr.

[2] The genealogy of Iestyn informs us that Meyryg, a prince of Siluria, marched against the Irish Picts, and defeated them, "but was killed by an Irishman concealed in a wood, since called Ystrad Meyryg."—*Iolo MSS.*, p. 352. Llwyn Gwyddyl, the Irishman's Grove, is within a short distance of Ystrad Meyrig. The tradition is valuable, although this Meyryg is placed in a very apocryphal age.

In Monmouthshire,—

Pentre Gwyddel, near the Usk, a little below Abergavenny.

It can hardly be conceived that a score of places should exist in eight small counties, bearing so significant a name, by a mere accident; especially when we know that the name coincides so remarkably with ascertained facts in the early history of this country. It is quite true that one, or two, or three, or four of them might be the result of events of later occurrence; but it is impossible to believe that the word should occur so frequently, unless there had been very numerous collisions, and at very various points, between the Gael and the Cymry; and we are unable to assign any later period for these events than that of the great Gaelic occupation we are now dealing with.[3] The argument, however, is

[3] It is true that isolated invasions took place at a much later period, as in the following instances recorded by Lhoyd:—

A.D. 914.—"The men of Develyne did destroie the ile of Mon or Anglesey." "About the same time Leofred a Dane, and Gruffyth ap Madoc, came from Ireland with a great armie to Snowdon."

A.D. 958.—"Abloic king of Ireland landed in Mon, and having burnt Holyhed, spoiled the countrie of Lhyyn."

A.D. 966.—"Roderike the sonne of Edwal Voel was slaine by the Irishmen, by whom Aberfraw was destroied."

A.D. 1031.—"The Irish-Scots entred Southwales, by the meanes of Howel and Meredyth, the sonnes of Edwyn ap Encon ap Owen ap Howel Dha, who hired them against Rytherch ap Iestyn."

A.D. 1041.—"Conan the sonne of Iago, with the power of Alfred king of Deuelyn, entred North Wales."

A.D. 1073.—"Gruffydd ap Conan came from Ireland with a great army of Irish."

A.D. 1087.—"Rees ap Tewdor not being able to meete with them, fled to Ireland, where he purchased himself great freends, and got an armie of Irishmen and Scots—and so landed in Southwales—and at Llechryd they gave him battell."

A.D. 1142.—"Cadwalader fled to Ireland and had hired Octer and

much strengthened by the geographical distribution, the several positions, and, in some cases, by the particular meanings of these local names. As regards their distribution, we have four in Anglesey, four in Caernarvonshire, four in Merioneth, one in Montgomeryshire, one in Radnorshire, six in Cardiganshire, three in Pembrokeshire, one in Glamorganshire, and one in Monmouthshire. Thus, out of the five-and-twenty instances, twenty fall within the limits which we have just assigned to the Gaelic territory. Of the remaining five, one is at no great distance from the Irish colony in Brecknockshire, one is actually within the territory of Rheged, and the Pembrokeshire instances may be accounted for by their proximity to the territory of Ceredigion,[4] unless they are rather due to the settlement on the coast of Dyfed, whose existence is implied in the account of Rhyddmarch, and in other passages to which we have alluded. Again, as regards the several positions of these localities, we shall find that they are placed, with very few exceptions, just where a vanquished and declining race would make their final efforts for independence. The Anglesey instances are among the low grounds, intersected, and partially isolated, by creeks and quicksands, which characterise the western extremity of that county. In Caernarvonshire, two are at the utmost point of the wild promontory of Lleyn, to which we can well imagine the Gwyddelod to have been beaten back,

the sonne of Turkel and the sonne of Cherulf, with a great number of Irishmen and Scots for 2000 markes to his succour, and landed at Abermenay in Carnaruonshire."

[4] One of them, in fact, was within it. See above, p. 34, *Note.*

step by step: a third is at the entrance of the terrific pass of Llanberis. In Merionethshire, we find two at the foot of the great mountain chain which extends from Traeth-Bychan to the Mawddach, protected on the north by the former estuary, and on the west by marshes and the sea; another is among marshes, at the mouth of a valley leading to Cader Idris. The Montgomeryshire instance, and two in Cardiganshire, are on the skirts of the Plinlimon group. The instance in Radnorshire, and two of those in Cardiganshire, stand at the entrances of gorges leading into that savage region of mountain and moorland, then and long afterwards clothed with impenetrable forests,[5] which lies between the Wye, the Tywy and the Teifi, and comprises portions of Cardiganshire, Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire, Brecknockshire, and Caermarthenshire. The remaining cases in Cardiganshire, and one in Pembrokeshire, are close upon the western coast. Twll y Gwyddel, in Glamorganshire, lies in a mountain pass on the borders of the Gaelic district of Rheged, and the instance which occurs near Abergavenny, is not far from the mouth of that wonderful valley which opens into Brecknockshire between the Sugarloaf and Blorenge. The names of three are highly significant. Cytiau 'r Gwyddelod, near Holyhead, I have already had occasion to notice. The two localities on the shore of Traeth Bychan bear the names of Muriau 'r Gwyddel, and Muriau 'r Gwyddelod, respectively. The name signifies "the Gwyddelians' walls," and one of them at least contains the remains of ancient fortifications. This is

[5] Leland.

especially important, because such fortresses are less likely to have been raised by temporary invaders during a mere foray, than by the actual possessors of the country as a means of defence against aggressors. They seem therefore to imply that the Gael were, for some time at least, in possession of the district in which they are found. In general I may remark that the localities we are considering are to be found principally in the western portion of the region which we have assigned to the Gaelic occupants, which we should be inclined to expect, on the supposition that they derived their appellations from having been the scene of final conflicts with the conquerors.

§ VI.—THE LEGEND OF CUNEDDA EXAMINED.

It will now be necessary to criticise more minutely the legend of Cunedda, which has been already cited for another purpose. It appears in various forms in Welsh mythological history, and is so frequently repeated, that it is impossible to overlook its importance. According to one account, Cunedda and his eight sons came in person to effect the deliverance of Wales; according to others, he sent his sons; most records agree in attributing the victory to the family of Cunedda, and not to that prince himself. All assert that he was a northern prince, and some set up for him a hereditary claim to Gwynedd, transferring to that early period the ideas and practices of a later age. A few ascribe to him the deliverance of Gower and the adjoining districts; but the majority of records make Urien the conqueror and first prince of

Rheged, and limit the victories of the Cuneddian race to North Wales, Cardiganshire, and part of Radnorshire. One document, quoted by William of Malmesbury, goes so far as to attribute to the Cuneddian race the conquest of Gwynedd, Dyfed, Gower, and even of Somersetshire.[6] The most explicit account is contained in the genealogy already quoted. But here we are met by a very curious fact. Of the twelve sons of Cunedda there enumerated, it is quite obvious that two at least are fictitious names. One is that of Clwyd, the name of a river, very probably imported from the north; the other is that of Oswal, evidently a Teutonic name, and apparently invented to account for a local appellation, which is known to have had a totally different origin. This is enough to cast doubt on the historical existence of the other brethren.

[6] The passage referred to is as follows:—"*Legitur in antiquis Britonum gestis*, quod a Boreali Britanniæ parte venerunt in occidentem duodecim fratres, et tenuerunt plurimas Regiones, Venedociam, Demetiam, Buthir, (*query*, Guhir?) Kedweli, quas proavus eorum Cuneda tenuerat: nomina eorum fratrum inferius annotantur Ludnertb, Morgen, Catgur, Cathmor, Merguid, Morvined, Morehel, Morcant, Boten, Morgen, Mortineil, Glasteing. Hic est illa Glasteing, qui per mediterraneos anglos, seeus villam quæ dicitur Escebtiorne, scrofam suam usque ad Wellis, et a Wellis per inviam et aquosam viam, quæ Sugewege, id est, *Scrofæ via*, dicitur, sequens porcellos suos, juxta ecclesiam de qua nobis sermo est, laetentem sub malo invenit, unde usque ad nos emanavit, quod mala mali illius *Ealdcyrcenes epple*, id est, veteris Ecclesiæ poma vocantur: sus quoque ealdeeyre suge idcireo nominabatur quæ cum eeteræ sues quatuor pedes habeant, mirum dictu, ista habuit octo. Hic igitur Glasteing, postquam insulam illam ingressus, eam multimodis bonis vidit affluentem, cum omni familia sua in ea venit habitare, cursumque vitæ suæ ibidem peregit. Ex ejus progenie et familia ei succedente locus ille primitus dicitur populatus, hæc de antiquis Britonum libris sunt."—*Will. Malmsb. de Antiq. Glaston. Eccl.; Gale Scriptores*, xx., vol. i., p. 295.

And it is to be observed that all the existing names are connected with the designations of their respective principalities, a circumstance which gives them a somewhat artificial aspect.[7] The names of Tibion, and his son Meirion, are in a plural form, while those of Ceredigion, Edeyrnion and Arwystli seem to stand to those of their eponymous heroes in the relation of plurals to their singulars.[8] This is sufficient at least to raise a suspicion that we have here the names not of individuals, but of nations, of various petty tribes of common origin, which moved down gradually from North Britain, and expelled the Gael from their seats in Gwynedd. The common legend represents the sons of Cunedda as putting themselves at the head of volunteers from Dyfed, Gower, and Gwent. Now it is obvious that the population of North Wales is of distinct origin from those to whom the legend traces them. A Triad, which bears strong marks of historical truth, mentions the three primary tribes of the nation of the Cymry, viz., the Gwentians, or the men of Essyllwg; the Gwyndydiaid, or the men of Gwynedd and Powys; and the tribe of Pendaran Dyfed, comprehending the men of Dyfed, of Gwyr, and Ceredigion. "And to each of them," the Triad proceeds to say, "belongs a peculiar dialect of the

[7] The account preserved in Lhoyd's History omits the name of Clwyd and Oswal, substituting however for the latter that of Ussa.

[8] This relation of terms appears not unfrequently in the Welsh genealogies. Sometimes the father appears in the plural form, and the son in the singular. Thus we have Gair the son of Geirion, lord of Geirionydd, March the son of Meirchion, &c. The fact is noticed by Professor Rees, in the case of Ceredig; but he gives it a somewhat different interpretation.—*Welsh Saints*, pp. 109, 110.

Welsh."[9] There can be little doubt that the author of the Triad is describing accurately the phenomena of his own time, and in the main they correspond with those of our own. It is much to be regretted that the dialectic varieties in various parts of Wales have not been so minutely ascertained and registered as has been the case in England. Still the several varieties of the Welsh language may, I believe, be classed under three principal dialects of North Welsh, South Welsh, and the language of Gwent and Morganwg. The exact limits of South Wales and Essyllwg are rather difficult to ascertain; the district of Gower, which is included by the Triad in the former, and which afterwards became a sort of debateable land between the contending principalities, has since been to a certain extent Anglicised, so that it is difficult to verify the assertion before us. Both however are so distinct from Gwynedd, that it is difficult to believe the people of North Wales to be a colony from Gwent and Dyfed, upon the supposition, at all events, that a portion of the former was depopulated by the Gael.[1]

It is worthy of notice that the region of Ceredigion, one of those which were won from the Gael by the sons of Cunedda, is included by the Triad within the territory of the tribe of Dyfed. At present, unless I am mistaken, the inhabitants of the northern portion of that county speak a dialect nearly akin to that of the population of Merioneth, while the language in the south of the county is nearly identical with that in use in Pembroke-

[9] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 61.

[1] This supposition is implied in a Triad quoted in the Iolo MSS., (p. 421,) and is assumed by Rowland, Mona Antiq., p. 37.

shire and Caermarthenshire. At all events the natives of the extreme north and extreme south of Cardiganshire are not always mutually intelligible. There is also reason to believe that the district of Ceredigion extended at one time north of the Dyfi,[2] so as to take in a portion of Gwynedd properly so called. In that case, we may well conceive that the people who gave name to that country occupied the northern portion alone, but finally extended their supremacy and their name over the neighbouring Demetians, at least as far as the Teifi.

In confirmation of this view, it must be recollected that the centuries during which these events are supposed to have occurred constituted pre-eminently the age of migrations. It is very difficult for us who live at a time when society is fixed, consolidated, and permanent—who dwell under the shadow of a civilisation built upon the precedents of ages—whose hope and ambition is circumscribed by home and country—to realise a condition of things when the whole population of the west was in a state of flux and agitation, when entire nations quitted their seats from time to time, and entire realms received new names from the various nations that had occupied them. The difficulty is great to us; but it was still greater to our ancestors in the middle ages. They lived at a time when society in some respects appeared even more unchanging than at present, and when men's thoughts and affections were certainly much more limited by place. They lived at a time when national migrations had ceased, and systematic colonisation had not yet begun. They lived at a time when bold and

[2] Iolo MSS., p. 476.

grasping adventurers were continually carving out for themselves an inheritance with the sword, and numberless petty lordships were governed in almost regal style by men who had neither title to the land, nor relation to its occupiers. It is not to be wondered then that, in their version of the ancient legend, they converted the mythical sons of Cunedda, the eponymous heroes of various kindred and associated tribes, into the likeness of the foreign adventurers of their own age, and represented them as placing themselves at the head of subjects with whom they had no concern, and dividing among a single family the inheritance of the conquered. Or, again, they described the partition of Gwynedd as an act of gratitude to the deliverers—a piece of poetical justice, no doubt, but more akin to poetry than history. I think we may fairly regard the whole story as the record of an extensive national migration, and I shall venture to call it the Cuneddian migration.

If this be the true view, if it was really a whole race, and not a single family alone, that left its home under some pressure external or internal, to find new seats in the south, we may well believe that the change was very gradual.[3] We know that, even in much later times, the territory of Gwynedd stretched to the north-east, considerably beyond its present limits. It is therefore probable that the Gwyndydians, (for so we must call the new occupants of Gwynedd, to which they gave their

[3] I do not mean that the actual movement of the invaders was gradual, a view which would be contrary to the history of migrations; but that the successive movements of tribes from the north may have extended over an indefinite period.

name,) moving down from their northern habitations, pressed first upon the north-eastern frontier of the Gael, and gradually established themselves in the country of Powys. The districts of Arwystli, Edeyrnion, Maelienydd and Ceredigion, as being most accessible, would next fall into their hands, and the Gael would remain entrenched behind the strong natural barriers which defend Mon, Arfon and Meirion. And hence in many versions of the legend we have their power limited to those counties. It is probable that a considerable length of time would be necessary for these events to take place in; and we have seen that it is in our power to place their commencement at a very early period.

I must turn aside for a moment to notice an apparent difficulty in the accounts of this migration. The nature of the country, as well as the universal tradition, would lead us to conclude that Mon, Arfon and Meirion were the last conquered of all the Gaelic possessions. We must therefore conclude that the Cymry pressed on the Gael from the east. The isle of Man, which appears to have formed part of the Gaelic principality of North Wales, would be their nearest place of refuge; and we are told that the Gwyddelians were driven to that place after the conquest of Mona. On the other hand, we are elsewhere informed that Tibion, the father of Meirion, died in the isle of Man, or Manaw, apparently before the conquest of Gwynedd by his brethren. This would imply that the Cuneddian race took a different course from that which has been assigned to them, and invaded Wales from the sea, proceeding from North Britain by the way of the isle of Man—a view inconsistent at once

with probability, and with the traditions already cited. The expression used by Nennius probably gives us the ancient legend, and thus serves to explain this tradition. He tells us that Cunedda and his eight sons came to Wales from the northern parts, from the country called Manau Guotodin. Now Nennius elsewhere speaks of Man as Eubonia, or Manau simply,[4] and would scarcely have described it as "the parts of the north, to wit, the country called Manau Guotodin."[5] It is therefore probable that the word Manaw was applied to several districts, and that the word Guotodin, possibly a national appellation, was added as a mark of distinction. And it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it was the country of the Gododin, or Ottadini, the British inhabitants of the eastern coast, north of the Brigantes, from whom, according to Mr. Stephens,[6] Aneurin's celebrated poem derives its name, and who may thence be concluded to be a Cymraic tribe, akin to the conquerors of Gwynedd.

§ VII.—ORIGIN OF THE GAELIC DOMINION.

We now come to a very obscure question, and one to which in our present state of knowledge on the subject we shall hardly be able to give a satisfactory answer—were the Gael of North Wales invaders after all? I do not mean to ask whether they were invaders absolutely, but whether they had dispossessed the Cymry? To answer the question in the negative would not prove them to be aborigines, it would only prove them to be

[4] § 8. [5] § 62. See above, p. 15, *Note*.
[6] Literature of the Kymry, p. 11.

the original inhabitants as compared with the present possessors of the country. The question whether the Celts had predecessors in these islands is a highly difficult one; but the solution is possibly not beyond the power of archæological science. But it is no part of the present question. The present question is—did the Gael temporarily dispossess the Cymry; or did the Cymry, for the first and last time, dispossess the Gael of a country which they themselves had never before inhabited?

To adopt the latter alternative almost necessarily involves the affirmation of another contested position, I mean, that the Gael preceded the Cymry in the possession of the whole of Britain, and were afterwards driven by them into the highlands of Scotland, and the neighbouring islands of Ireland, Man, and the Hebrides. I will not open this question now, (as it is far too extensive to be treated of here,) but assume it on the authority of the best historians and ethnologists.[7] Still it will not be out of place to state briefly some of the leading arguments on either side. On the one side we have the great argument derived from geographical position. The Gael are situated further from the great cradle of the human race, and from the continent of Europe. They would therefore appear to have preceded the Cymry in their advance westwards, and if so, they would doubtless seize first upon the nearer and more fertile districts, after-

[7] Niebuhr, History of Rome, Transl., vol. ii., p. 522, *sq.* Thierry, History of the Norman Conquest, b. i. E. Lhuyd. Dr. Prichard suggests this view, but does not positively adopt it.—*Physical History of Mankind*, vol. iii., c. 3., § 12.

wards occupied by the other great branch of the Celtic family. Add to this, that there appears greater proof of connexion between the Welsh and the continental Celts, than between the latter and the Irish.[8] The Welsh have an obscure tradition of an earlier race, whom they drove out or made slaves of.[9] The earliest known name of Britain, Albion, seems connected with Alban, a name now confined to the highlands of Scotland.[1] Finally, Lhuyd discovered in Wales numerous local names, which can only be interpreted by reference to the Gaelic idiom.[2] On the other hand, we have an absence of traditional evidence in favour of this view among the Welsh and Irish alike, except the vague legend alluded to above; and we have on the part of the former nation a claim to be the aborigines of the country, whatever the value of that claim may be.

Let us assume then that the Gael were the first Celtic inhabitants of Britain, whether aboriginal or otherwise; and that, at various periods anterior to the Roman invasion, the Cymry dispossessed and drove them forward, and were themselves invaded and circumscribed by foreign tribes, as the Belgæ and Coritani. It is obvious that the earlier possessors would retire into the more distant, the least penetrable, and the least enviable districts, as for example those in which they still exist, Ireland, Man, the Highlands and Hebrides. But it is

[8] Prichard, Physical History of Mankind, vol. iii., c. 3, § 11.

[9] Thierry, b. i.

[1] Aristot. de Mundo, c. 3. The book, however, is pronounced to be spurious.

[2] Welsh preface to the Archæologia Britannica.

also evident that they would hold out, for some time at least, in Wales, Cumberland and Cornwall, just as the Cymry did centuries afterwards. The former of these districts, as the most extensive and impregnable, would probably be their last possession in South Britain. And, surely, what the mountain ranges of Gwynedd and Ceredigion became in later ages to the Cymry, they were then to the Gael; what they became in later ages to the Teutons, they were then to the Cymry. To the former they were a secure bulwark, to the latter an impassable barrier, perhaps for centuries. Of course we have no data for fixing the age in which this struggle commenced, and it is equally impossible to say how long it would continue. As to the former question, the name given to Britain by the author of the treatise, "De Mundo," would lead us to conclude that the whole, or the greater part of it, was in the possession of the Albanich,[3] until within a very few centuries of our era.[4] The answer to the latter question would depend on the resistance of the old inhabitants, the population of the aggressors, and the extent to which they were pressed upon by new invaders. We know that the Cymry had been dispossessed of the south-eastern portions of the island shortly before the invasion of Cæsar;[5] we know also that at that period the population of South Britain was enormous,[6] and would therefore require an outlet to

[3] The Scottish Highlanders. [4] Aristot. de Mundo, c. 3.

[5] The Belgæ had a tradition of their arrival, and tradition in those ages was probably short-lived; the invasion of the Coritani, too, is placed in the age immediately preceding the Roman invasion.

[6] "Hominum est infinita multitudo."—*Cæs. Bell. Gall.*, b. v., c. 12.

the north or west. In Ireland, so far as we know, the Cymry never settled;[7] and, from what we know of the Caledonians at a somewhat later period, it is probable that their northern limit was already fixed. They would therefore be compelled to press upon, and gradually to supplant, the more isolated tribes of the Gael in North Wales; and it is quite conceivable that this process of extermination continued until the victory of Caswallawn Law Hir, in the fifth century. We should here take notice of a fact which, to a certain extent, falls in with our argument. A people called Cangani[8] are placed by Ptolemy and Richard in the west of Ireland; and the latter writer tells us that a portion of the Cangi and Brigantes emigrated to Ireland in the first century of our era.[9]

This view of the history of North Wales seems, to say the least, more probable than that a colony of Irish Scots would seize upon and occupy the least accessible and least eligible portion of South Britain, neglecting the more inviting districts in the immediate neighbourhood, which were under the dominion, not of their subsequently successful opponents from Cumbria and Strathclyde, but of Silurians and Demetians, who, as we are told, were

[7] Prichard, Physical History, vol. iii., c. 3, § 12, p. 148.

[8] Γάγγανοι.—*Ptolemy.*

[9] "Circa hæc tempora, relicta Britannia, Cangi et Brigantes in Hiberniam commigrarunt, sedesque ibi posuerunt." One cannot help suspecting a connexion between these Brigantes and Brychan Brycheinioc, a patriarch of Gaelic origin.—*Ric. Ciren., de Situ Brit.*, ii., c. 1, § 17. Compare however i., c. 8, § 9, where Richard appears to imply that the language of these immigrants referred them to the Cymraic branch. One may doubt his having sufficient grounds for the assertion.

unable to face them alone. If the northern Picts and Scots never effected a settlement in England, confining their invasions to predatory incursions, is it likely that their brethren from the other side of the channel would be either willing or able to seize and retain for a century and a quarter, not the rich province of Loegria, tenanted by half-Romanized Britons, but the wilds of Arfon, the heritage of the free mountaineers of Gwynedd? It is true that the Irish Scots were a hardy and adventurous people, and were already, or soon afterwards, making piratical excursions, and establishing foreign colonies. It is probable that they did so in various parts of South Wales in the fifth and sixth centuries; it is certain that they did so in Scotland in the sixth. But it is very probable that the Gaelic dominion in North Wales, never previously extinguished, was kept up by occasional supplies from Ireland; and not altogether impossible that the Dalriadic colony in the western Highlands was in some measure occasioned by the loss in North Wales both of actual territory and of an outlet for superfluous energy.[1]

There is one further difficulty in accepting this view,

[1] It is asserted by Professor Rees, on the authority of Mr. Moore, (History of Ireland, c. 7,) that "an invasion of Britain on an extensive and formidable scale took place towards the close of the fourth century, under the auspices of a king of Ireland, called Nial of the Nine Hostages."—*Welsh Saints*, p. 109, *note*. This Nial occurs in the Four Masters, and the Annals of Innisfail, as reigning from 379 to 405. The latter chronicle certainly informs us that a large number of captives, and among them St. Patrick, were brought into Ireland from Britain in 388. This is, however, much too late for the *commencement* of the Gaelic kingdom in North Wales.—*O'Conor, Rerum Hibb. Script.*

namely, that all the traditions of the subject represent the Gwyddyl as invaders; and some represent the invasion as having occurred at a comparatively short distance of time before their expulsion. To this it must be said, that one tradition at least appears to regard the invasion of Gwynedd as contemporaneous with the first arrival of the Gael in Britain, though it evidently regards that event as posterior to that of the Cymry;[2] that the occasional supplies which were probably sent to Gwynedd, and the known piratical habits of Scots and Scandinavians, may have caused the chroniclers of a later age to represent the whole affair as a mere foray of Irish and Lochlynians, antedating by centuries the northern invasions of Britain; and the same pride which prompted the Cymry to falsify the account of their first entrance into the island, would induce the men of Gwynedd to regard themselves as aborigines, rather than as invaders. They are not the only nation that have been content to sacrifice the glory of conquest to that of aboriginality. We all know how the Athenians bound up their hair with grasshoppers, in token that they were children of the soil; yet the early institutions and traditions of that people exhibited no faint marks of foreign conquest and military dominion.[3] It is probable that our antiquarian discoveries will one day prove that neither Gael nor Cymry were the first inhabitants of these islands, will silence the latter in their vain

[2] See above, p. 21.

[3] *E. g.*, in the relics of a division into castes, or something very like one. The tradition of the contest between Posidon and Athene also seems to point to something of the kind.

boasts of aboriginal possession, and thus destroy the traditional evidence against the prior occupation of the former.[4] If then we assume that the Welsh were prompted by vanity to claim a precedence to which they had no right, we may believe that the same vanity would lead them to pervert the traditions concerning the Gwyddelian occupation of North Wales.

This however is a further question, and the position just advanced cannot rise above a conjecture. But the general fact of the Gaelic occupation of North Wales is much more than a conjecture; the fact rests on indisputable evidence; though we are compelled to make out its extent and duration, as well as its circumstances, by the help of obscure and inconsistent fragments of tradition. There is one point however on which I must insist, and that is the importance of the fact. Whether the Gael were invaders or not, it is clear that the ancient civilisation, if any such existed, was broken up and had disappeared before the conquest by Caswallawn. The Cuneddian migration is the first chapter in the history of North Wales. To the Cuneddian family the kings and nobles of North Wales traced up their genealogies. From the age of Cunedda we are to date, if not the introduction, at least the establishment of Christianity in that province.[5] Previous history we have none: the

[4] Worsaae, Primeval Antiquities of Denmark, Tr., pp. 127–135. A valuable paper on this subject was read by Mr. D. Wilson, before the British Association, at Edinburgh, in August, 1850, entitled, "An Inquiry into the evidence of the existence of Primitive Races in Scotland prior to the Celtæ."

[5] Iolo MSS., p. 472. Trioedd Ynys Prydain. Myv. Arch., ii., p. 61.

earliest Welsh legends are nearly all connected with South Wales, or with North Britain.[6] The genealogy which claimed for Cunedda the hereditary monarchy of North Wales, reminds one strongly of the supposed title of the Peloponnesian kings to the inheritance of Hercules.[7] The same spirit which converted the Dorian migration into the return of the Heraclidæ, probably created the female succession which handed down the right and title to the royalty of Gwynedd. It is clear that, to the inhabitants of the south, Gwynedd was at this time an unknown land. Their imagination filled it with giants, fairies, monsters, and magicians.[8] The inhabitants exercised strange arts: they had cauldrons of like virtue with that which renewed the youth of Æson:[9] a red dragon and a white were buried as the palladium of their metropolis.[1] Among their monarchs was a veritable cat, the offspring of a wandering sow.[2] Their chief philoso-

[6] The Gael, it is said, found "no princes" in Gwynedd.—*Iolo MSS.*, p. 522.

[7] Professor Rees has successfully destroyed the Welsh genealogies of the period prior to the departure of the Romans.—*Welsh Saints*, § 5. The pedigree of Cunedda is also open to the remarkable objection that for six generations the name of the father is derived from that of the son.

[8] Mabinogi of Math. Hanes Taliesin.

[9] Mabinogi of Branwen.

[1] Mabinogi of Lludd and Llefelys.

[2] Iolo MSS., p. 471. Compare the Triad of the "Three powerful Swineherds," Myv. Arch., vol. ii., p. 72. This wandering of swine runs through many of the Welsh legends, as for instance in the Mabinogion of the Twrch Trwyth, and Math the son of Mathonwy. The tradition of Arthur's boar-hunt still lingers in parts of North Wales. We may compare with these the story already quoted from William of Malmesbury, above, p. 41, *note*. Have we the true key to these legends, in Mr. Stephens' suggestion with reference to the

pher was of gigantic stature, and sat on a mountain-peak to watch the stars.[3] Their wizard-monarch, Gwydion, had the power of effecting the strangest metamorphoses.[4] The simple peasant, dwelling on the shore of Dyfed, beheld across the sea those shadowy mountain summits pierce the air, guardians as it seemed of some unearthly region. Thence came the mist and storm ; thence flashed aloft the northern streamers; thence rose through the silent sky the starry path of Gwydion.

In South Wales, meanwhile, we find matters in a much more advanced state. The Silurians, formerly the most powerful tribe of Britannia Secunda, exercising, as it appears, some sort of supremacy over their neighbours,[5] having been of old the opponents of Roman power, became at length the inheritors of Roman civilisation. The rest of South Wales was divided into small principalities, the chief bearing the ancient name of Dyfed, which in course of time was quite independent of its neighbours on the east. The country was under a regular ecclesiastical establishment, subject to the see of Caerleon. As yet we find no bishoprics in Gwynedd, and for a long time the ecclesiastical establishment seems to have been unsettled, corresponding probably to the state of the country.[6] Ceredigion, which, as we have seen, was

"Hoianau," that the "pig typifies the Welsh people?"—*Literature of the Kymry*, p. 250. *Cf. Virg. Æn.*, viii., 42, *sq. Niebuhr, Hist. Rom., Tr.*, i., p. 195.

[3] Idris Gawr.

[4] Mabinogi of Math.

[5] Duæ aliæ sub Siluribus gentes fuere; primum Ordovices . . . deinde Dimeciæ."—*Ric. Ciren., de Situ Brit.*, i., c. 6, § 24.—*Iolo MSS.*, p. 609.

[6] Cybi, the first person called a bishop in Gwynedd, was posterior

earlier conquered than most parts of the Gaelic kingdom, soon became a separate principality, and appears to have continued independent of Gwynedd from that time forward. And one by one the possessions of the Gael were wrested from them; a new people came in, introducing a name possibly connected with that of their mythical leader.[7] The Ordovices passed away, and with them the Cangani; the latter, it may be, to find a refuge with their brethren of the same name in Ireland.

§ VIII.—CONSEQUENCES OF THE CUNEDDIAN MIGRATION.

It only remains to trace as concisely as possible the results of this event in the subsequent history of Wales—results which will combine to form at once an additional proof of the fact, and an illustration of its importance. The first and most prominent consequence was the establishment of a new power in Gwynedd, a power destined to draw to itself the sovereignty of the Cymry, to be their last stay and defence, and in some measure, perhaps, the cause of their ultimate downfall.

We have seen that the principal kingdom in South

to the conquest by Caswallawn.—*Welsh Saints*, p. 266. But we meet with nothing like fixed sees before the time of Maelgwyn Gwynedd.

[7] I shall probably be censured by Welsh scholars, for venturing to connect the name of Gwynedd with that of Cunedda, and by Welsh antiquaries, for throwing doubts upon the historical existence of that personage. I do not know what arguments may be urged in favour of his existence. The Marwnad Cunedda, ascribed to Taliesin, has recently been pronounced, by a competent authority, to be of doubtful origin, and even if genuine, does not amount to contemporary evidence.—*Stephens' Literature of the Kymry*, p. 282.

Wales was that of Essyllwg, and that the remainder of that country was divided into several small territories. Several of these appear to have been grouped into larger principalities, probably varying with the relative importance of their constituent elements. The country of Dyfed seems to have preserved its appellation throughout. Rheged, lying between Essyllwg and the region last mentioned, and for a time independent, fell subsequently under the power of each of its neighbours at various periods. It may be doubted however whether its independence was at any time more than partial. But it is evident that there existed at an early period an independent power on the north of Dyfed. We are often able to determine the boundaries of ancient kingdoms, by those of dioceses still existing. Thus the kingdom of Siluria, or Essyllwg, is represented by the diocese of Llandaff; that of Dyfed, or Demetia, by St. David's. It is well known that a third diocese existed to the north of the latter, I mean that of Llanbadarn-fawr, founded in the sixth century by Paternus, an Armorican refugee.[8] We are informed in the Life of Paternus, published originally by Capgrave, that David,[9] Teilo and Paternus, undertook a journey to Jerusalem together, to receive consecration from the patriarch; and that, on their return, they divided the spiritual government of Wales between them.[1] They are also classed

[8] Usher, Britt. Eccll. Antt., c. xiv.

[9] Nova Legenda Angliæ, fol. cclix. The same story occurs in the Life of St. David, by Rhyddmarch, and that of St. Teilo, by Geoffrey of Llandaff.—*Whart. Ang. Sac.*, ii., pp. 637, 663, *sq.*

[1] "Regressi enim ad patriam in tres episcopatus Britanniam diviserunt."—*Capgrave*, fol. cclix.

together by a Triad, under the title of "Blessed Visitors."[2] It is clear from this that the churches founded by them were regarded as of co-ordinate rank, and as two of them represent ancient secular divisions, it is probable that a similar division coincided with the diocese of Llanbadarn.

The limits of that diocese may be determined with some degree of accuracy, at all events as regards its southern frontier. If we start from the sea-coast about fourteen miles south of Aberystwyth, we shall find two lines of churches running nearly straight and parallel to each other, and extending from Cardigan Bay, through the counties of Cardigan, Brecknock and Radnor, to the borders of Herefordshire. The churches composing the northern line, on the side of Llanbadarn-fawr, are dedicated to St. Paternus, while those on the south are under the invocation of St. David. This probably marks the ancient boundary between the dioceses of St. David's and Llanbadarn. The latter must therefore have occupied the northern part of Cardiganshire, the mountainous district to the east of it, and a portion of the country between the Wye and Severn. To the north and east it would be conterminous with the present diocese of St. David's.[3] It is worthy of notice that the line of churches which I have just mentioned, is marked throughout the western portion of its extent by a chain of fortresses, occupying in many instances both sides of the valleys which would naturally divide the districts;[4] while we find a little to the north of it the "Cwys yr Ychain

[2] Myv. Arch., vol. ii., p. 61.

[3] See Rees' Welsh Saints, p. 198.

[4] One of them bears the name of *Clawdd Ddewi*.

Bannog," a dyke extending east and west for some miles, which we may conceive to have formed part of a line, if not of defence, at least of demarcation. The division moreover coincides in the main with the distribution of dialects which I have already noticed.[5] These facts all tend to confirm the notion of its making a civil or national, and not merely an ecclesiastical, separation.

Upon this supposition the question remains unsettled, what name we are to give to this principality. The Life of Paternus already quoted informs us that he founded churches and monasteries *throughout the whole* of Ceredigion;[6] and the Life preserved in the Cotton Library further speaks of him as ruler and pastor of the church of Ceredigion.[7] It would appear from these statements that the principality of Ceredigion was originally co-extensive with the diocese of Paternus, especially as there are no signs of his having founded churches in the south of Cardiganshire. And this falls in with the view already suggested, that the north of Cardiganshire was the earliest seat in Wales of the family of Ceredig, and that they subsequently extended their dominion and their name over a portion of their Demetian neighbours.[8]

On the other hand, we are elsewhere presented with another threefold division of South Wales, also resting partly on the authority of a Life of St. Paternus.[9] In this "it is

[5] See above, p. 43.

[6] "Monasteria et ecclesias per totam kereticam regionem, quæ nunc cardiganshire appellatur, edificavit."—*Capgrave*, folio cclviii.

[7] "Postquam *Cereticorum ecclesiam* (ut loquitur vetus Vitæ illius scriptor, quem in Bibliothecâ Cottonianâ vidimus) *& pascendo rexisset, & regendo pavisset*."—*Usher, Britt. Eccll. Antt.*, c. xiv.

[8] See above, p. 44.

[9] Cotton MS.

said that the whole of South Wales was divided into three kingdoms, the same forming three bishoprics. Of these, the kingdom of Seissyl received its consecration from St. Paternus, bishop of Llanbadarn Vawr, as the other two, those of Rein and Morgant did, from St. David and St. Eliu, (Teilo)."[1] This is explained by a passage in the Mabinogi of Pwyll, which gives the name of Seisyllwch to a district comprising Ceredigion and Ystrad-Tywi,[2] that is to say, Cardiganshire, Caermarthenshire, Cemaes and Gower.[3] The same division of South Wales is implied by a passage in the Welsh Laws, which in speaking of a general convention of the Welsh nation, informs us that it was gathered from Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth, the latter comprising Reinwg, Morganwg and Seisyllwg.[4] It is also more directly asserted in another passage, where we are probably to read "Seisyllwg" for "Riellwg."[5] In this latter Reinwg

[1] Lady Charlotte Guest's Mabinogion, iii., p. 74, *note.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

[3] The name of Seisyllwch also occurs in the Triads, but its locality is not fixed.—*Myv. Arch.*, ii., p. 60.

[4] "Ac yno y doethant gwyr Gwynedd agwyr Powys agwyr Deheubarth a Ricinwc a Morganwc a Scisyllwc."—*Ancient Laws of Wales*, (Record Comm.,) p. 412. *Cf. Iolo MSS.*, p. 461, (74,) where Essyllwg is read erroneously for Seisyllwg. It is pretty clear both from the structure of the sentence, and from external evidence, that the three districts last mentioned are regarded as divisions of Deheubarth, and I suspect we are to read "o Ricinwc a Morganwc a Scisyllwc."

[5] "The South is in three parts: Reinwg, that is, the county of Rein; and Riellwg; and Morgannwg."—*Ancient Laws of Wales*, p. 687. Compare the following extract from the Mabinogi of Math, whether the perfect symmetry of the numbers leads us to the same conclusion:—"Pryderi the son of Pwyll was lord over the one-and-twenty Cantrefs of the South; and these were the seven Cantrefs of Dyfed, and the seven Cantrefs of Morganwc, and the four Cantrefs of

is explained to be "the country of Rein." Two persons of this name occur, both of them princes of Dyfed, one in the ninth century, and the other in the eleventh.[6] This, in conjunction with a fact already mentioned, leads us to infer that Reinwg is another name for Dyfed. But as Reinwg and Morganwg are derived from Rein and Morgan, we must look for the origin of Seisyllwg in Seissyl or Sitsyllt. It is suggested by an authority already quoted that it may be derived from Sitsyllt, the father of the first Llywelyn.[7] But we also meet with the name as that of one of the early princes of Ceredigion,[8] a fact altogether consistent with the position assigned to Seisyllwch. Its limits however considerably exceed those of the principality represented by the diocese of Llanbadarn; and we may perhaps infer from them that the tripartite arrangement of South Wales was preserved, while the name and extent of its component districts varied from time to time.

It is impossible to determine the duration of the principality whose existence I have just indicated; but the diocese of Llanbadarn, which would probably outlive the corresponding civil division, seems to have lasted nearly

Ceredigiawn, and the three of Ystrad Tywi," the seven last mentioned making up Seisyllwch.—*Lady C. Guest's Mabinogion*, iii., p. 217.

[6] Annales Cambriæ, Ann. ccclxiv. (808.) *Ibid.*, post Ann. 1016. Monumenta Historica Britannica, vol. i. Brut y Tywysogion, Myv. Arch., ii., pp. 474, 504. The name also occurs in a genealogy of Owen ap Hywel dda, which seems to contain the names of early sovereigns of Dyfed.—*Ancient Laws of Wales*, Preface, p. v.

[7] Lady C. Guest's Mabinogion, p. 74, *note*.

[8] Williams' Biographical Dictionary, p. 21. It is rather curious that this person was contemporary with the first Rein of Dyfed, as the father of Llywelyn was with the other.

two centuries from its foundation.[9] Two powerful neighbours arose, one on either side. On the south, the kingdom of Dyfed appears to have increased in importance about the sixth century. A change of dynasty is recorded to have occurred in that age. Hyfeidd the Aged, a foreigner, the son of St. Lupus of Troyes, became the prince of Dyfed, and possibly infused new energy into it.[1] A prince of Dyfed was at this time elected to the sovereignty of the Britons, if we may credit the testimony of Geoffrey of Monmouth, possibly supported in this instance by that of Gildas.[2] At all events, the last trace of subjection to the Roman metropolis of South Wales was swept away, when in the sixth century the archiepiscopate was removed from Caerleon to Mynyw, situated at the extreme point of the Demetian territory.[3]

In the meantime a new power was formed on the north of Llanbadarn, which even in the time of Paternus seriously menaced it.[4] The country of Gwynedd, the

[9] "The same year (A.D. 720) the unbelieving Saxons ravaged many churches of Llandaff, St. David's, and Llanbadarn."—*Brut y Tywysogion, Myv. Arch.*, ii., p. 472.

[1] Trioedd Ynys Prydain. Myv. Arch., ii., p. 62.

[2] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 359. Cf. Ep. Gildæ:—"Demetarum tyranne, Vortipori . . . . Tu etiam, insularis draco, multorum tyrannorum depulsor tam regno quam etiam vita supradictorum novissime in stylo prime in malo, Maglocune." The sense depends partly on our placing a comma before or after "supradictorum." Compare the genealogy of Owen ap Hywel dda, already referred to.

[3] It would seem that this translation was effected, if not by violence, at least not by mutual consent.—See *Wharton, Ang. Sacr.*, ii., pp. 667, 670, 673.

[4] "Interea Mailgunus Rex Borealium Britonum, ad debellandos et deprædandos Australes Britones cum suo exercitu venit."—*Cap-*

conquest of which we have been occupied in tracing, was about this time consolidated into one kingdom. Previously it appears to have been under various independent rulers, and there is reason to think that it was not perfectly united until a later period.[5] Still the territorial title of Maelgwyn Gwynedd, the son and successor of Caswallon, seems to prove that he had acquired that supremacy over North Wales, which he afterwards attempted with partial success to extend over his neighbours. It is to the interference of Maelgwyn that we are probably to refer the fall of the principality represented by Llanbadarn. Paternus complains of the tyranny which he had exercised over his

grave, fol. cclviii. The authority of Albert le Grand may perhaps be cited as that of an independent witness, as he professes to have taken his account from the ancient breviaries of Quimper and Vannes. It is rather curious that he makes mention of the river Clarach as flowing by, and giving name to, the monastery of Paternus. This is the more remarkable, as the maps and topographies of that time, as Saxton, (1575,) Jansson, (1629,) Speed, and Drayton in the "Poly-olbion," give the names of Salck and Massalck to the streams that flow through the vale and into the bay of Clarach. It is therefore possible that the name of Clarach marks an independent tradition. I do not know whether it occurs in the Cotton MSS. The writer's confused notions of British geography may be taken as further evidence. He did not know the difference between Wales and Cornwall. He writes as follows :—" En ce temps là regnoit en la Province de VVales vn Prince nommé Malgonus homme fort mal conditionné, lequel entendant merveilles de S. Patern, le voulut tenter; & vne guerre luy estant survenue contre le Roy de Bretons septentrionaux de l'isle [*sic*] il amassa son armeé pres le fleuve de Clarach."—*Vie des Saincts de la Bretagne Armorique*, p. 93.

[5] Powys, for example, was not united to Gwynedd, if dependant on it. We read also of kings of Mona, and even of Man, as well as a distinct and probably subordinate line of Venedocian princes of Cornish origin.

flock. Gildas, too, who seems to imply that Mona was the chief and original seat of his power,[6] accuses him of gaining his authority by foul means. He is represented by Geoffrey of Monmouth as supreme monarch of the Britons,[7] and Gildas enumerates some of his immediate predecessors in that office, whom he had successively deprived of their authority.[8] There is a fantastic legend preserved in the Welsh Laws, giving an account of the election of Maelgwyn to the sovereignty of Wales. The scene of the council is laid on the Dyfi sands, a portion of which still bears the name of Traeth Maelgwyn.[9] We may therefore fairly conclude that the name of Maelgwyn marks the consolidation of Gwynedd, and the commencement at least of its aggressions on the independent kingdoms of South Wales. The ultimate result of his interference maimed the tripartite division of that country, a division which would very probably be regarded as essential. It may therefore be conceived that Gwynedd subsequently took its place among the kingdoms of Wales, so as to maintain the integrity of their confederation. It is clearly impossible to describe with any degree of accuracy the several characteristics of these nations. It is probable, however, that the Silurians had been Romanized to a greater degree than their countrymen on the north and west, and they appear to have preserved among them a certain amount of learning and civilization.[1] The Gwendydians on the contrary, the

[6] Ep. Gildæ. [7] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 359. [8] Ep. Gildæ.

[9] Ancient Laws of Wales, (Record Comm.,) p. 412. Iolo MSS., p. 461.

[1] It is certain that the Romans had a more extended influence in this district than among the Ordovices and Demetæ: two of the most

children of the north, nursed among the wild mountains of Arfon and Meirion, and trained to war and conquest by their conflicts with the Gael, may have become to the Silurians what the Northmen were to the civilized nations of southern Europe. They were from the beginning an aggressive and conquering race, and it is to this that we are to attribute the supremacy which they subsequently obtained over their countrymen, and the long resistance they were able to make the English and Normans.

The period between the death of Maelgwyn in the sixth century, and the accession of Rhodri Mawr in the ninth, seems to have been marked by important changes in the south. It is most probable that the principality of Ceredigion, whose limits in the days of Maelgwyn have just been determined, assumed during this period a form and extent more nearly approaching that of the

important relics of their power to be found in Britain still exist in Caerleon and Caerwent. The following description of the former at the close of the twelfth century is pretty well known:—"Videas hic multa pristinæ nobilitatis adhuc vestigia: palatia immensa aureis olim tectorum fastigiis Romanos fastus imitantia, eo quod a Romanis principibus primo constructa, et ædificiis egregiis illustrata fuissent; turrim giganteam; thermas insignes; templorum reliquias, et loca theatralia muris egregiis partim adhuc extantibus, omnia clausa. Reperies ubique tam intra murorum ambitum, quam extra, ædificia subterranea; aquaram ductus hypogæosque meatus; et quod inter alia notabile censui, stuphas undique videas miro artificio consertas, lateralibus quibusdam et præaugustis spiraculi viis occulte calorem exhalantibus."—*Giraldi Itin. Camb.*, c. v. *Cf. Iolo MSS.*, pp. 350, 374. The existence of religious and educational establishments at Lantwit and Llancarvan seem to point in the same direction; the connexion of the former with the Emperor Theodosius may be fabulous, yet the legend is not devoid of value.—See *Williams' Eccl. Ant. of the Cymry*, p. 97, *note.*

present county of Cardigan. The territory of Seisyllwch may have been formed by conquest during this interval. And there is reason to think that it acquired some degree of supremacy over the rest of South Wales. For we find it recorded that the royalty of South Wales, including the actual dominion of Dyfed, with a sort of unrecognised claim over Essyllwg, was conveyed to Rhodri by his marriage with Angharad, the daughter of Meurig, king of Ceredigion.[2] In Gwynedd, in the meantime, the sovereignty of the descendants of Cunedda was not uninterrupted. A passage which we have already cited hints that a formidable rebellion was raised by the subjugated Gwyddyl in a very early period;[3] and in the seventh century the dominion of the country fell into the hands of one Cadafael, the assassin of Iago ab Beli, king of Gwynedd.[4] From the epithet Gwyllt[5] attached to his name, and the fact of his being described as a stranger monarch,[6] one cannot help suspecting that he was one of the descendants of the Gael, who may very well have maintained themselves as a distinct nation until that age. The "Arymes Prydain Fawr," formerly ascribed to Taliesin, and subsequently to Golyddan, in the seventh century, might perhaps have been regarded as nearly contemporary evidence of the existence of Gwyddyl in Mona as a distinct and important nation, even after their

[2] Myv. Arch., ii., p. 62.

[3] See above, p. 19.

[4] Trioedd Yyns Prydain. Myv. Arch., ii., p. 65.

[5] The epithet is applied to at least one person of Irish origin, Idio the son of Sutric.—*Williams' Biographical Dictionary*, p. 236.

[6] Trioedd Ynys Prydain. Myv. Arch., ii., p. 62.

defeat by Caswallawn, had it not been determined by a high authority to be of a later date.[7] It is evident however that some such distinction may be traced to a much later period, in the internal organisation of Gwynedd, as compared with the south. Not to mention the diversity of local customs, (as the mode of inheritance, for instance,[8]) which taken alone would only prove the early separation of the respective districts, we find decided marks of conquest in Gwynedd, which are absent in Dyfed and Essyllwg. For, in the first place, a kind of villenage existed in the former, more complete and oppressive than was permitted in the south,[9] and we are not without grounds for the inference, that this system was in some way connected with the co-existence of distinct races.[1] We have also a species of aristocracy in North Wales, unknown in the southern portions of the country. The fifteen tribes of Gwynedd, dating, as it is said, from the tenth century, but probably representing a state of things which had then been some time in existence, appear to have exercised a certain degree of political power, which was elsewhere in the hands of the nation.[2]

[7] Myv. Arch., i., p. 156. Stephens' Literature of the Kymry, p. 287, *sq.* [8] Ancient Laws of Wales, p. 84.

[9] Howel Dda "permitted every uchelwr . . to rule his bondsmen according to conditional bondage in South Wales, and perpetual bondage in Gwynedd."—*Ibid.*, p. 573.

[1] "The sons of Cunedda led the Cymry, and expelled the Gwyddelians from the country, making prisoners of such as had their lives spared. . . . And none of them remained in the country, except such as were made captives for ever, *(namyn a wnaed yn gaethion a hynny yn dragywydd).*—*Iolo MSS.*, pp. 522, 523, (123). Compare this with the perpetual bondage *(cathiwet tragwydawl)* of the passage cited in the preceding note.

[2] Iolo MSS., pp. 405, 407, 478.

They were popularly believed to be the pure representatives of the Cymry as distinguished from the race which had been corrupted by an admixture of Gaelic blood; and it seems probable that this view was at least an approximation to the truth.[3] In Powys, a similar class existed under another name, and were ascribed to a like origin.[4] We are probably to refer to the same source, the existence at an early period of certain clans, to whom peculiar immunities were granted. One of these derived its name from the conqueror of Gwynedd, Caswallawn Law Hir, and another was connected with the district of Lleyn.[5] The men of Arfon also enjoyed particular privileges, which were regarded as memorials of their resisting and requiting an invasion of the Strathclyde Welsh, in the time of Rhun, the son of Maelgwyn Gwynedd.[6] We may perhaps infer from the record of this transaction, that the migrations from the north which we have traced to the fifth century were continued in the sixth, as they were certainly revived in the ninth.[7]

The date of Rhodri Mawr may be fixed as that in which the princes of Gwynedd first attained their full

[3] Iolo MSS., pp. 477, 478.

[4] *Ibid.* They were called "Gwelygorddau," as distinguished from "Llwythau."

[5] "The three Banded Families (Teulu) of the isle of Britain: the family of Caswallawn Law Hir; the family of Rhiwallawn the son of Urien; and the family of Belyn of Lleyn. That is, they were so named, because there was neither head nor sovereignty over them, so far as the liberty of their families and possessions reached, if they were questioned within those limits, save the jurisdiction of the country and people."—*Trioedd Ynys Prydain. Myv. Arch.*, ii., p. 62.

[6] Ancient Laws of Wales, pp. 50, 51.

[7] Brut y Tywysogion. Myv. Arch., ii., p. 582. See above, p. 41.

power. By inheritance, stratagem, or conquest, they had made themselves masters of Powys on the east, and Ceredigion on the south, the latter apparently involving the sovereignty of Dyfed. The division of Wales among three of the sons of Rhodri seems to be a recognition of the ancient threefold confederation.[8] The kings of Gwent and Morganwg resisted their aggressions, so that the three constituent sovereignties were henceforward those of Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth on the south, the latter including the ancient dominions of Ceredigion and Dyfed, with a vague claim over Gwent and Morganwg.[9] Subsequently to this division, we read of petty sovereigns of Ceredigion and Dyfed,[1] (the latter term being used in its narrowest sense,) who apparently stood in an ill-defined relation to the prince paramount of Deheubarth, and occasionally resisted his power.[2] It is also worthy of notice that the kingdom of South Wales

[8] It is important to remember that Anarawd, Cadell and Merfyn were not the only sons of Rhodri.

[9] The preface to the laws of Hywel Dda is especially worthy of notice. The codes of Gwynedd and Dyfed entitle him "king of all Wales," that of Gwent merely "king of Wales," adding that he enacted the laws "when Wales was in his possession in its bounds." —*Ancient Laws of Wales,* (Record Comm.,) pp. 1, 164, 303.

[1] *E. g.*, Gwaethfoed, king of Cardigan, and Hyfeidd, king of Dyfed, the latter of whom was involved in warfare with the sons of Rhodri. —*Asserius de rebb. gestt. Ælfredi, Cf. Annales Cambriæ Ann.* ccccxlviii., (892). We also find a distinction made between two grades of kings, the Cuneddian princes of Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth being "crowned kings," and those of Ceredigion, Morganwg and Fferyllwg (between Wye and Severn) being "fettered." *Trioedd Ynys Prydain, Myv. Arch.,* ii., p. 64. *Cf. Iolo MSS.,* pp. 407, 408, 449, where the two princes last named are excluded from the Cuneddian confederation.

[2] We hear of "lords" of Dyfed down to a very late period.

now lost, for the most part, the ancient national appellation of Dyfed, which as I have said, was henceforth used in a narrower sense, and assumed that of Deheubarth or Dinefawr, having become a political rather than a national division. When the Cuneddian princes were established in it, they made continual aggresssions on the domains of the Silurian princes. In the reign of Hywel Dda, its eastern limits were fixed at Crickhowel in Brecknockshire, and a continual warfare was waged between the two neighbouring powers, until the independence of Morganwg terminated with the reign of Iestyn the son of Gwrgan. It is clear that the Cuneddian princes of South Wales had been continually pressing on it, from a corresponding change which had taken place in the ecclesiastical divisions. Urban, bishop of Llandaff, writing to Pope Calixtus II. in the twelfth century, complains that the bishops of St. David's had taken from his diocese Ystrad Tywy, Gower, Kidwelly, and Cantref Bychan.[3] This appears to be an ecclesiastical version of the fact that these districts, or the greater part of them, had passed from the dominion of the princes of Essyllwg into that of the Cuneddian monarchs of South Wales.

Much more might be written on this head, but to trace fully the consequences of the Cuneddian migration would be in effect to write the history of Wales. I will notice one further result, because it has lasted to the present time, and is therefore in some respects the most important, as it is the most obvious. The inhabitants of North

[3] Wharton, Ang. Sac., vol. ii., pp. 673, 674. Cf. Iolo MSS., pp. 373, 374.

and South Wales are clearly two different races. Of the distinction of dialect I have spoken elsewhere; there is is also a physiological difference. On this head Dr. Prichard observes :—

"In North Wales, a fair complexion and blue eyes prevail, according to the observation both of Dr. Macculloch and Mr. Price. There is probably no part of Britain where the inhabitants are less intermixed with Saxon or German blood, certainly they are much less intermixed than the South Welsh. In parts of South Wales, particularly in Glamorganshire, black eyes are very prevalent, and the hair is frequently black."[4]

The author of the "Physical Atlas of Natural Phenomena" confirms these observations as regards the difference of complexion prevalent in North and South Wales; and hence concludes that the inhabitants of the former are not unmixed with a Teutonic, perhaps a Belgic element.[5] Finally, I have extracted these remarks from an able article in the *Quarterly Review*. They bear closely on the subject of this paper, although they certainly do not coincide with it in detail :—

"Others again who observe how the South Wales features, after being interrupted in North Wales by an inlet of the Cimbric or more northerly type, reappear in Anglesey, may rather suspect that a refluent Gaelic wave has been thrown back from Ireland upon the north and south extremities of the Principality. This latter assumption is countenanced not only by the philological observations of E. Llwyd, but by certain Welsh traditions that fall within the historical period."[6]

Is it too great a refinement to add, that the mutual

[4] Physical History of Mankind, vol. iii., p. 199.

[5] Johnston's Physical Atlas.

[6] Quarterly Review, No. clxxiv., September, 1850.—"The Church and Education in Wales."

antipathy which still subsists between the extremities of the Principality may be taken as an additional proof of different origin ? It is certain that in earlier times a strong principle of repulsion existed in the many distinct though kindred races composing the population of Wales, which caused endless divisions and subdivisions of territory, and, working counter to the principle of political centralization, generated continual intestine wars. The language applied by M. Thierry to the inhabitants of southern Gaul, may with trifling alterations be used of the Welsh throughout the period of their independence :—

"They detested all foreigners, yet a restless turbulence, a wild passion for novelty and excitement impelled them to seek their alliance, whilst they were torn by domestic quarrels and petty rivalries between man and man, town and town, province and province. . . . Nature had given them all, all except political prudence and union, as descendants of the same race, as children of one country. Their enemies combined to destroy them, but they would not combine to love each other, to defend each other, to make one common cause. They paid a severe penalty for this."[7]

Shall we say that this spirit is extinct yet ? Does it not survive—happily in the only possible form—in the absurd local attachments, the mutual dislike, or rather the total ignoring of each other's existence, which is still an active principle among our countrymen ? Is it not conspicuous and energetic in their utter inability to combine for a patriotic, as distinguished from a national purpose, for anything in fact but to keep alive the effete traditions of a very questionable antiquity, and to re-

[7] Norman Conquest, b. viii.

enact what they believe to be the ceremonies of ancestral heathenism ?[8]

[8] It may be as well to mention two or three points affecting my argument which have come under my notice during the printing of this paper. In p. 8 I said that Bullium has been identified with Builth. It is with greater probability regarded as another form of the name Burrium (Usk). In that case one name less has been preserved in South Wales, not one more being lost. I have also identified Stucia with the Ystwyth, after Baxter and others, (p. 7). In the map of Roman Britain lately published by the Record Commission, (*Monumenta Historica Britannica*, vol. i.,) Stucia is given as the name of the Dyfi. In that case it is to be regarded as a lost name, and rather referred to North Wales. In fact the Ystwyth is scarcely of sufficient importance to be singled out by Ptolemy, without making mention of the Dyfi and Mawddach; and it is only by considerable twisting that the names of either the Stucia or the Tuerobis can be got out of the Ystwyth and Teifi. In p. 15 I do not think that enough has been made of the testimony of Rhyddmarch to the settlement of Gael in Pembrokeshire. He describes Boia, the persecutor of St. David, as "Scottus quidam." These words are omitted by Giraldus in his *rifacimento* of Rhyddmarch, probably because he was not aware that any Scots had ever occupied that district. The tradition then had died out by his time; and as Rhyddmarch died only half a century before the birth of Giraldus, one can hardly conceive that such a tradition would be very general in the days of Rhyddmarch. But as even in those times historians would avoid improbabilities, except in the matter of miracles, Rhyddmarch would not have said "Scottus quidam," in the plain matter-of-fact way he does, without something like earlier documentary evidence. It is therefore probable that this passage embodies a tradition of very high antiquity.

TOPOGRAPHICAL INDEX.

THE names in SMALL CAPITALS are found in, or derived from, ancient authorities, including Richard of Cirencester; those in *Italics* are names in ordinary use; and those in CAPITALS include obsolete names, with such as remain only in Welsh, or are retained as the appellations of hundreds and lordships, and are therefore unlikely to be generally known.

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